

Invincible Saint ~Salaryman

– the Path I Walk to Survive in This Other World –

**- Volume 9 -
Fate's Options**

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[Tseirp Translations]

Chapter 143

First encounter of bandits?

After we departed, we traveled down the highway towards Meratoni without any issues but when evening came, an abnormal event happened to Estia.

This time, Lionel and I led in front while Kefin steered the carriage as the coachman. Inside the carriage, Cathy conversed normally with Estia while keeping an eye on her.

Then when evening came, just when I thought that it was about time we searched for a village to stay in, Estia suddenly jumped out of the carriage.

Before I had a chance to move, Fornoir apparently made the choice to approach her and started running in Estia's direction.

It was a behavior unlike a horse even though she's a horse but I trust her as my partner so I picked up on her intention and we began chasing after Estia.

"Don't run, Estia! What happened exactly?"

When I shouted to tell her that, I noticed that Estia's body blurred for an instant.

"...This place closely resembles the terrain where Estia lived in the past."

If she called herself Estia, then the existence I'm speaking to right now would be none other than the Darkness Spirit.

"Why did you switch with Estia even though the sun still has not set?"

"Estia was beginning to feel distraught after looking outside and the cat beastwoman tried to talk to her but the conversation rapidly fell apart and she jumped out."

It felt like I was being pressed by various troublesome matters.

Am I incapable of seeing through the Darkness Spirit?

“...Our journey to Meratoni is a final decision. There’s no turning back you know? Furthermore, if she’s had any trauma, won’t you, as the Darkness Spirit, notice?”

“It’s not as if I know all of Estia’s memories. Sorry, but could you please give me a moment?”

“...Okay. But we’ll be continuing on. Since there should be a village slightly ahead if we continue on.”

“...Thank you.”

Since Cathy and Lionel arrived as we were having our conversation, I spoke honestly about this time’s incident... apart from the matter regarding spirits though.

“Apparently, Estia thought that she saw a place similar to this when she was sold to the Empire. It seems like she got frightened after recalling that shocking event.”

“...There’s no helping it then nya. For childhood memories, the more shocking it was, the more entrenched it will be nya.”

“Perhaps she was kidnapped from Meratoni or one of the surrounding villages... or perhaps there’s a chance that she was sold?”

“Yup. Let’s first hurry to the village to rest.”

“Okay. It shouldn’t be a problem if monsters appear at night with the 3 of you around but she might be able to calm down mentally if she gets some rest.”

I recommended Estia to lie down inside the carriage and Cathy and Kefin got along well while sitting at the coachman seat as we began to continue forward.

Just before the sun completely set, we finally arrived at the village but something felt strange.

“I am S-rank Healer Luciel affiliated with the Healer’s Guild Church Headquarters. Is the village elder in?”

When I introduced myself to the men at the village entrance who were being wary of

us, I thought that I saw a flash of impatience across their faces but before I knew it, Cathy and Kefin who were at the coachman seat disappeared.

Then, when I turned back to look at the men, they had been rendered unconscious before I knew it.

“...Why did you do that?”

I was confused as to why the 2 of them attacked the villagers but the one who admonished me wasn't Lionel but Fornoir.

She suddenly stood on only her hind legs as if performing a wheelie and I fell off because I couldn't react in time.

“Ouch! Why did you suddenly do that...”Burururu” I'm sorry.”

When I stood up, Fornoir's face was right in front of mine and it showed anger.

That's how it felt to me so I gradually calmed down.

“Lionel, this?”

“Apparently, unusually, we've encountered bandits of some sort.”

“Aren't bandits urban legends?”

“The public order in Saint Schull Allied Nations is tremendously good so you might not have a chance to see them but they do exist. In the Empire, there are even bandit bands to the scale that requires the army to be dispatched.”

Lionel lectured me while he dismounted and requested for rope before beginning to tie the bandits up.

I thought that it would gradually cause a commotion but I didn't feel any presence of villagers coming out and it also didn't feel like Cathy and Kefin were caught.

“Please wake Estia and have the horses and the carriage enter the Hermit's stable.”

“...Okay. Fornoir. I'll call for you tomorrow so could you go inside?”

But Fornoir shook her head side to side.

I felt like I could see the determination that dwelled within her eyes.

“Ha~. If that’s the case, then could Estia ride on you?”

Her head drooped when I asked.

She seemed to have agreed to the compromise.

“Luciel-sama! There might be enemies outside as well.”

I understood Lionel’s concern but I went to wake Estia inside the carriage.

“Estia, bandits or the likes might appear so stay together with Fornoir.”

“Yes.”

I entrusted Estia to the Darkness Spirit and deposited the tied up bandits inside the carriage that Estia descended from.

“Lionel. I’ll listen to Fornoir’s selfish desires once in a while. Moreover, Fornoir would notice if enemies approach and if she gets injured, I’ll lock her up in the Hermit’s stable as punishment.”

“...It can’t be helped if that’s your decision.”

Lionel compromised saying that there’s no helping it, Fornoir looked at me with an indescribable expression while I could expect the Darkness Spirit to be able to exert it’s strength given that night is arriving.

“That’s right, Lionel. In cases like this, would it better to wait? Or to head to the village elder’s house?”

“Do you know the location of the village elder’s house?”

“Yes. Since I’ve been to this village countless times.”

“The, let’s head to the village elder’s house. Since the leader of the bandits might be there.”

“Alright.”

“...But, in this situation, if we do not hide the horses and the carriage, we would be

discovered...”

“...Ha~ So troublesome. Lionel, we’ll go with a frontal attack. It’s fine if we defeat them from the front if we’re seen. Either way, with those 2, the enemies might already be unconscious.”

“Understood.”

We set off after I activated [Area Barrier].

Although there weren’t any evidence of fighting in the village, none of the houses had lights in them even though the sun is setting.

“...Were they all gathered somewhere?”

“Maybe. But I’m curious as to why there aren’t any evidence of fighting...”

We headed in the direction of the village elder’s house while having questions in our head before we could finally see lights.

“I’m worried about why we don’t see Cathy and Kefin’s figures...”

“But if it is a bandit band that those 2 are not able to escape, it must have considerable ability and scale...”

When we approached closer, I could hear voices similar to cheers and there was a banquet being held in front of the village elder’s house but it was not a normal banquet.

Villagers drew near to Cathy and Kefin while the 2 of them desperately avoided the magic from the demon race.

While wondering why there was totally no sounds of battle even though they were fighting, Lionel, the Darkness spirit, and I immediately understood the situation and moved.

“That’s a demon? Do you think if its movements will be sealed if I use [Sanctuary Circle]?”

“The demon race is weak to Light and Holy attribute magic. If you activate [Sanctuary Circle], it might not die but it will be able to weaken it.”

“I wish that it would be able to recover status abnormalities too if possible though.”

“I’ll make a move first.”

“Okay. Please protect those 2.”

“Understood.”

Lionel rushed in.

“Luciel, Ane-sama, if the humans do not return to normal with the activation of [Sanctuary Circle], I will use my magic. At that time, please look after Estia’s body.”

I heard that but I didn’t answer.

Because I was already activating the [Magic Circle Chant] for [Sanctuary Circle].

The pale light that illuminated the darkness spread across the entire location where the banquet was being held and an instant after the vortex of light was seen, I heard a scream.

After I rushed forward with the horse carriage, I saw a mountain of corpses... or not, I confirmed the figures of collapsed villagers who were being manipulated.

“Ha... Ha... Luciel-sama, you saved us. If it wasn’t playing around in the battle, it would have been dangerous.”

Looking closely, Cathy and Kefin had multiple injuries looking as if it was gouged out and the large shield held by Lionel was nowhere to be seen.

“Immediately after the demon was suffering, all the villagers’ movement stopped and in that gap, the 3 of us somehow dealt the finishing blow together nya.”

Looking at the sweat pouring out of Cathy’s face, I could guess that it was as strong as the Red Dragon.

“...How did the Empire overlook a demon of this caliber? I’m more curious about that.”

Even though Lionel’s large shield was missing and his left arm was twisted in an angle that it shouldn’t be able to bend in, he was apparently still worried about the demon.

The demon that the 3 of them dealt the finishing blow to was of similar stature to a human and there wasn't any large differences in its facial features too.

But, it had a horn, had a tail like beastmen and its limbs were covered in robust scales like Dragonewts.

"You've done well fighting against this. Even so... it seems to originally be a human."

I placed the corpse of the demon race that still gave off a presence even upon death into my magic bag.

I was slightly wary but it smoothly entered and I could finally settle down.

"We'll need to ask the villagers when they wake up regarding this demon and the Empire. Before that, the treatment for you all comes first."

"Burururu."

Fornoir came to my side and it felt like she wanted to entrust Estia's unconscious body to me.

"So the Darkness Spirit also lent its strength huh..."

Only Fornoir heard my mutterings and nodded.

I didn't actually see the Darkness Spirit fight in the field but I could guess that it was the Darkness Spirit's power that made the villagers collapse.

I don't know anything about the Darkness Spirit's objectives and I can't completely trust it but I'll try believing in it slightly.

While thinking so, just to be safe, I applied the highest grade healing magic, purification magic and status recovery magic on Lionel and the others and I applied Recover and Dispel on the villagers.

Chapter 144

Mystery of the demon race

We searched the location where the demon was and where the villagers were being manipulated but there were no traces left as to why there was a demon in this village.

“...Is it possible that because I activated Sanctuary Circle, the traces of Darkness, curses and the likes ended up being extinguished?”

When I spoke to the 3 of them to dispel my anxiety, I saw Lionel and the others give me radiant smiles.

“I wonder... even though it was a demon race wrapped in such a thick layer of miasma, after you activated it, the demon looked like it was not clad in miasma at all so it's not strange to think if you purified anything along with it.”

Lionel gleefully spread his arms and shook his head side to side.

I knew that I asked the question to the wrong person.

“We crushed it before it performed any ritual so it's almost certainly all right nya. It is not Luciel-sama's fault even if the truth is not elucidated nya.”

In the first place, it's completely my responsibility that we are now unable to investigate if there were any kind of traces.

“That's right. This is the first time apart from the Red Dragon that I encountered such a strong opponent. If the demon didn't play around during battle and Luciel-sama and Lionel-dono didn't come running, I would have been dead together with Cathy around this time”

Maybe he read my expression but Kefin was my only ally... those words sounded like he meant that the demon was even stronger than Lionel.

“Kefin, this is the time when we should tease Luciel-sama a little more nya.”

Cathy laughed as she appeared to wash away Kefin’s words.

If the wounds suffered this time during combat with the demon was while it was playing around, the fact that Cathy and Kefin might have really died shook my heart.

“I think so too but it looks like the villagers are waking up.”

Hearing Kefin’s words, I looked over towards the villagers and the villagers were certainly tossing and turning.

“...I don’t know how this situation will appear to them. But, please sheathe your swords.”

I said as I reformed the [Area Barrier].

With that, even in the unlikely event that we receive a surprise attack, as long as none of them die in a single attack, it’s unlikely that anybody would die.

While having that thought, I called out.

“Dear villagers, are you all right?”

After calling out multiple times, the villagers woke up one by one.

“I am S-rank Healer Luciel affiliated with the Healer’s Guild. Do you all have a clear grip on your consciousness?”

As I continued to call out, the effect gradually began to show as the villagers gradually came to consciousness.

Then, the instant they saw my figure, their faces paled.

“Luciel-sama!? When did you arrive?”

“It’s Luciel-sama.”

“Even his retainers came along with him.”

When one of them awakened, the other’s consciousness cleared one after the other and for some reason, they prostrated before me.

It seemed like there were villagers who remembered my appearance.

“Please don’t prostrate on the ground. It has not even been an hour since I arrived in this village. At the village entrance, I noticed that an unusual phenomenon was happening and when I rushed over, I saw that you all were being manipulated by a member of the demon race, we defeated the demon and I immediately treated you all with healing magic. Even so, what happened?”

When I said that, one man walked over and once again began to prostrate in front of me.

I recalled that he is this village’s village elder.

“Actually, the children were captured as hostages in my house. We were threatened by that man calling himself a demon...”

“Threatened?”

“...After he mentioned about performing a ritual, my memory...”

The village elder made a troubled expression and it didn’t look like an act.

Fornoir who is sensitive to lies didn’t show any reaction.

“Is there anyone who knows? I don’t think that everyone fell into the hypnotized state all at once?”

But nobody raised their hands.

Given that it was a demon that could mess around with Cathy and Kefin, it might have been able to manipulate the villagers all at once...

“All right. Village elder, please go look at your house. Cathy and Kefin, please follow the village elder and check on the condition of the children in the house. If they’ve become demons then please allow them to rest in peace.”

““Yes!””

Confirming that Cathy and Kefin were headed towards the village elder’s house, I decided to find out when exactly the villagers lost their memories.

While thinking that it was great that I decided to go on an expedition to Meratoni such

that fortunately the villagers are alive and I could listen to the situation from them, I begin questioning them.

“I’m sorry if you all are feeling tired but could you please tell me the memories you have around the time right before when you were manipulated? Please tell me whatever you all remember up to the process where the demon captured the children.”

I don’t know why the demon laid dormant in this village but I believe without a doubt that somebody guided and brought him here.

However, anything to testify to that didn’t show up.

On the contrary, all of them unanimously said that they didn’t know about the village elder’s words earlier about being threatened by the demon.

“It’s as if...?”

I’ve seen this phenomenon recently.

That’s right. In the Dwarf Kingdom, after the Darkness Spirit used its power.

But at that time everyone with no resistance, except me, had their memories tampered with due to the undulations of Darkness.

“Lionel, the village elder’s house. Everyone, please wait here.”

I didn’t pursue and channeled magical power into my Illusionary Cane on the spot and deployed a [Sanctuary Circle] at once.

The next instant, I heard the sound of an explosion *Dooooon* , something flew out and stood floating in the air but Lionel swung something that looked like his Flame Greatsword and a vortex of flame that I’ve never seen before caught that something and shot it down.

“So Lionel is capable of something like that as well huh?”

While muttering that, I looked towards the gathered villagers and deployed a

[Sanctuary Circle] as well.

“To think that there would be more...”

Facing the villager that was suffering, without hesitation, I threw the Holy Dragon Spear that I poured magical power into.

The instant it transformed into the same appearance as the initial demon after passing its threshold of suffering, the Holy Dragon Spear pierced deeply into the demon’s chest and it collapsed with a shriek.

The villagers were confused by my sudden actions and there were even some who cried out but when I transformed my weapon to the Illusionary Sword and sliced off the limbs of the villager who turned into a demon, inversely, nobody cried out due to the excessive cruelty.

My body moved in a way that shocked even myself but it didn’t feel like I was being manipulated, I felt that it must unmistakably be because my sense of crisis was awakened.

“Well then, demon, why have you entered a village in the Saint Schull Allied Nations, moreover in a village that is close to the center?”

“Gahaa.”

Without placing much concern in the blood that it coughed out, I applied [Heal] on its four limbs and slightly recovered its wounds.

I found out that healing magic was effective on the demon race and purification magic and status recovery magic also had a regular effect on them so I came to an understanding that they were different from the undead.

“I may not be a Paladin but if there are demons that are capable of easily destroying a village like this around, I believe it is my mission to defeat them.”

“Ha... ha, then you should just kill me.”

“You don’t want to live?”

“Kukuku... with these wounds... I’ll die... either way.”

“I will remove the magic stone in your chest before you can detonate your magical power so I do not recommend self-detonation. Furthermore, I can treat you so that you don’t die.”

I applied [Heal] on the cut limbs, stopping the bleeding.

“I don’t particularly have any grudges with the demon race. We may not coexist but I do not intend to interfere with your reason for living. Furthermore, in this era with no Hero... in this era with no Demon Lord, what reason is there to wage war?”

“Then why did you kill our brethren.”

“Then I’ll ask you back, if I go to the demon race’s territory and brainwash a whole village, what would you do?”

“.....”

“That’s your answer... leaving that aside, are you a pure demon?”

“.....”

“Or perhaps were you originally from an experimental facility in the Empire?”

“?!”

It’s blood pressure immediately dropped after it gave an anxious expression.

“I don’t intend to do anything bad...?! [Middle Heal], [High Heal].”

I chanted healing magic with [Chant Termination] but the demon didn’t recover.

“...Why did he die? To really lose your life, it’s worse than a pledge... it’s more of a kind of curse.”

To think that there would be curses that won’t be dispelled after I chant [Dispel]... I felt that I’ll have to listen to the Darkness Spirit.

I noticed small whispering voices overlapping and there was a slight buzz.

At that moment, Lionel returned carrying a charred corpse together with Cathy and Kefin who had suffered injuries.

“...There were still demons here as well?”

“Yeah. Since you all weren’t around, I launched a surprise attack and defeated it in an instant while it was still suffering from the [Sanctuary Circle]. Did you find anything there?”

After I healed the 3 of them by chanting [Area High Heal], I once again chanted status recovery magic before listening to them.

“...No, in exchange, the children are fine. Although it looked like they were trying to transfer them to somewhere...”

“Okay. I’ll listen to anything else later.”

“Yes.”

I looked back at the villagers, glanced at each and every one of their faces and spoke.

“Everyone, we’ve defeated the demons so it is fine to return to your own homes. I will be in the village elder’s house today so please contact me if you have anything.”

If they have forgotten everything, there would be no meaning in questioning them... instead, it would lead to distrust.

I don’t think it’s a good choice to stay at the village elder’s house but there are people that I have treated before among the villagers so I should be able to at least have some of them talk to me.

I thought so as I prioritized returning the children to their parents.

After turning on the light to the village elder’s house and confirming that all the children were no longer there, I sucked in a breath.

“...So what’s the reason for this disastrous scene?”

I understand that there was a battle but it was in a seriously terrible condition.

“We were attacked from behind when we were guided here nya.”

“It was really dangerous, we both received attacks... if the pale light didn’t shine in from outside and cause the demon to suffer, we might have died.”

“I somehow slashed that demon who was mimicking the old man from behind when the 2 of them rained attacks on it.”

“We were saved when Lionel-sama attacked nya. Just that the house caught fire after that and we had to rush nya.”

“I was surprised when they blew the roof off as they were extinguishing the fire.”

“That’s right!! Lionel. What was that flame attack using that greatsword?”

“There was a weapons maniac within the church’s Knight Corps and he/she taught me the way to use it.”

“...You did well to manage to get him/her to teach you.”

“He/she taught me because I am Luciel-sama’s retainer. He/she proudly laughed and said it was because I am the retainer of a person who will recover the prestige of the church.”

“...I’m just a coward though. Well then, let’s have dinner.”

“““Yes!”““

Before entering the house, I stored the horses including Fornoir into the Hermit’s stable and after waking the men inside the carriage and confirming that they weren’t of the demon race, I released them.

After laying the still unconscious Estia down on the bed, we just only finished returning all the children to their parents.

I applied purification magic on the table and laid out dinner.

“After dinner, we’ll tidy up the village elder’s house as we search around.”

“““Yes!”““

Then, we circled around to have dinner.

“Cathy and Kefin, during the initial battle, did you 2 notice anything at the scene?”

“He was holding onto a suspicious staff and there was also a pot nya.”

A staff and a pot huh... was it some ritual?

"...Where did those items go?"

"The magic released by Luciel-sama caused the staff and the pot and the magic circle to disappear."

"Magic circle?"

I didn't notice such a thing but did it all really get erased by [Sanctuary Circle]?

"I didn't see it just now but shall we search for it tomorrow morning?"

My train of thought was brought back by Lionel's words and I continued the conversation.

"Yeah. Were there any other aspects that were suspicious?"

"Now that you mention it, none of the villagers thought that the man who we thought to be the village elder was suspicious. Perhaps there's the possibility of a mimicry ability?"

"I was curious about that too. For Fornoir to not be able to discern it... that usually doesn't happen. She should have been able to notice that they were bandits or not but she wasn't able to react... perhaps it's different for the demon race and for monsters or it's possible that they are capable of imitating sensations like smell or even emotions."

"I know nya. Kefin and I didn't notice with our smell and sense as well nya."

Fornoir who is probably a spirit didn't notice, Cathy and Kefin who are beastmen didn't notice as well.

Is that really possible?

"Indeed... Even so, to have 3 demons appear, I feel like it is an excessive allocation of forces to control a single village..."

"Well, this time it is almost certain that the Empire is involved."

After Lionel showed an expression of shock, I was hit by some pressurizing killer gaze.

“...Do you know something?”

“I recalled about the connection you all had with investigating the demon race at that time so I asked the demon that I defeated if it was originally from an experimental facility in the Empire and it died just from that. I’m guessing it was a curse.”

“...Do they seriously intend to create demons?”

What I felt from Lionel was not only that of a warrior but also the reluctance to admit that his homeland the Empire was being dyed in darkness.

Such emotions were overflowing out.

It’s times like this that saying some words that can bring about hope or joy would slightly save the atmosphere.

I felt like I was taught that by someone.

“I don’t know. However, it would be quite unpleasant if this continues and maybe I should seriously think about the strength to protect myself.”

“Do you intend to make your own private squad?”

Kefin immediately jumped on the topic.

“Yeah. Since I’ll go to the Empire someday.”

“...Why?”

I guess Lionel would really think like that since he knows about my personality but demons are appearing even outside the territory of the Empire.

It felt like the situation wouldn’t be much different no matter where I am.

Then, there’s only 1 thing I want Lionel and the others to do.

“The reason why you all want to maintain your slave position is because it would be resolved when you go to the Empire right? I don’t want to have the members I trust stay as slaves forever.”

“...There’s no helping it then. However, going to Meratoni, returning to Rockford, heading to Nelldal, aiming for other countries, for the time being, it doesn’t seem like you would be able to get married.”

Just as I thought I was able to divert his feelings slightly, it was returned with enmity.

“...It’s unrelated so don’t suddenly drop a bomb!!”

“Lionel-sama is just worried nya. Polygamy should be accepted in Saint Schull Allied Nations nya. I’ve never heard a guy ask the girl to wait nya. You should quickly attack Lumina-dono nya.”

Just as I thought that she was being noisy with her nya nya, Kefin further chimed in his support.

“That’s right. I don’t think that you would get another chance.”

I looked to me like Kefin was saying that with flared nostril to himself but his face was close by and I received mental damage so I cut the conversation and gave my instructions.

“...I’m diligently thinking about it so don’t mention it. Also for tonight, perhaps there would be an attack so I leave the search for enemies and guard to you all.”

“““Yes!”“““

Thus, the strangely exhausting dinner ended and we started cleaning up the house of the village elder.

Chapter 145

Threat from the undulations of Darkness

In the end, we didn't find any eye-catching documents in the village elder's house.

"For nothing to turn up means that the village elder himself didn't know why he became a demon?"

"Yes. Moreover, the sensation I felt when I slashed him gave me the feeling that he was not as strong as to the extent of the initial demon we encountered."

"...Certainly, if he had the same strength as the first demon, we would have died nya."

"Would it be somehow related to how his presence changed in an instant?"

"Perhaps. Tomorrow, we'll inspect the combat ground and question the villagers. Well, it's unlikely that we would uncover everything so if nothing comes up by noon we'll depart for Meratoni."

"That's reasonable."

"Leave the lookout duty to me nya."

"Luciel-sama and Lionel-sama, please rest."

"Okay. Please wake me up if you sense anything astray, even if it is something trivial."

"Understood nya."

After activating [Area Barrier], I took a nap in a vacant room.

"Before sleeping, maybe I'll inform Pope-sama about the incident with the demon race in this village and ask Pope-sama to investigate if there's anything out of place."

After contacting Pope-sama with the magic communication bead, without using Angel's Pillow, I lied down in such a way that I would be able to get up at a moment's notice and closed my eyes.

Was it true that humans became demons? That sole question circled around my head.

My eyes naturally opened and I got up.

“What’s this out of place feeling?”

Leaving the room, I found Lionel asleep.

“...It’s impossible for Lionel to not notice me.”

To investigate the strange feeling, I applied [Recover] on Lionel but it was ineffective.

“Darkness Spirit? Or demon race?... I don’t want to die though.”

When I moved to the living room, the room I carried Estia to was emitting a suspicious light.

It’s honestly troublesome.

But I did decide to trust her once so I should follow my own logic.

I inspired myself in such a way and opened the door to the room Estia slept in.

“...Undulations of Darkness? Is she absorbing it?”

While Estia remained asleep on the bed, her body was absorbing and releasing a black mist that was emitting light different from miasma.

“It’s like breathing.”

Deciding that it would be bad if I suffer a surprise attack by this, I used the Hermit’s key and called Fornoir.

“Sorry but I leave it to you.”

After applying purification magic, I activated [Area High Heal] to recover Estia and Fornoir’s physical strength and observed the situation.

It was the second time I’ve seen Fornoir’s shining appearance emitting white light but this was the first time she looked as if she was a Pegasus to me.

It felt as if the emitted light formed light wings and golden rings could be seen around all her hoofs.

At that moment, the light was absorbed into Estia.

Finally, Fornoir's light emission ended and she wanted to return to the Hermit's stable.

"I don't really understand but thank you."

Not knowing if they have any effect, I applied [Extra Heal] and purification magic on her before returning her to the stable.

When I've sent Fornoir off and turned to Estia, the black waves had disappeared and the Darkness Spirit's consciousness awoken.

"I thank you for calling Ane-sama, Luciel-sama. If that continued, the undulations of Darkness may have caused mental instability."

"You're awake... Do you know the situation you were in? I don't know if it was done intentionally or subconsciously but the undulations of Darkness were being absorbed and released as if you were breathing?"

If the Darkness Spirit is running amok without us noticing, I felt that it would definitely be a terrible thing.

"Sorry. While using Estia's body, I've never used such strong waves before so it seemed like this time, I kind of self-destructed."

"...Please be careful. Leaving that aside, as for the demon race, did you notice at that time that instead of just one, there were also 2 others around?"

"What? There were others?"

Her reaction was slightly over-the-top but I judged that she had no merit in lying so I continued the conversation.

"Yeah. The village elder and a villager transformed into demons. It seemed like even Fornoir didn't notice so I'm bothered by it."

"...Ane-sama didn't notice too? If that's true then Luciel, you must unify all the countries or have absolute power if not the Empire will make their move."

"Ha? Please tell it to me in an easier to understand manner."

Leaving aside the sudden topic on the Empire, I knew that the Darkness Spirit was

holding onto information that we don't know but I was suddenly confronted with an unreasonable request.

Thinking about it normally, it would be understandable if I say that it is impossible but... so that I am not confused any further, I posed one question at a time.

"It means that there's not much time before the Empire commences war!!"

"...How do you know that?"

"...Originally, the Empire was researching on creating a Hero. Do you know that it shifted to research on producing the power of the demon race?"

"It's the first time I've heard of it."

"Researching on creating a Hero gave good reputation but the point was that they wanted human weapons."

It can't be helped.

Wars aren't the only battle so it would be fine as long as they can fight.

Even for those who gained their strength, they would once again turn to dust as the age goes by.

If that's the case, it would be more constructive to research a method that would make the number more plentiful.

Furthermore, they can fight monsters and there are labyrinths around too...

"...Did that experiment succeed?"

"No, they could not create Heroes. I said it previously, the result of that is the cause of this time's incident. If this is reported... wait, you said that you guys defeated all of them right?"

"Yeah. However, due to the activation of [Sanctuary Circle] as they were in the midst of the ritual, not only the evidence but everything was erased..."

It would have been great if anything remained behind.

"...Then, since the experiment was a failure, the research might go on for another

couple of years? If that's the case then during that time..."

The Darkness Spirit looked at me with eyes that could pierce through me.

"Wha, what is it?"

"Luciel, if you don't want to die, collect all the blessings."

"...The phrasing you used refers to collecting the blessings of Spirits and Dragons?"

"That's right. Receive the blessings of the Fire and Wind Spirits and you would reach Fluna's foundation..."

Maybe the Darkness Spirit reached its limit when it talked to that point as it fell asleep.

"To run out of steam at the crucial moment... why am I getting caught up in one thing after the other?"

I muttered as I stared at Estia and silently left the room.

When I opened the door, Lionel was waiting but his complexion was bad.

"Are you okay?"

"Yes. My consciousness is slightly muddy but it won't impede my movements."

"I wouldn't call that okay... I'll check on the condition of the 2 people outside."

"I'll come along."

Lionel forced himself to stand up and he looked intent on it so I agreed to him coming along.

When Lionel and I left the village elder's house, I immediately saw the 2 of them but their staggering figures were strange.

"Just to be sure."

When I activated [Recover] with [Magic Circle Chant], the 2 of them held their weapons and charged over.

Lionel readied his Flame Greatsword and stood in front of me.

“It’s Luciel-sama and Lionel-sama nya.”

“...That startled me.”

The 2 of them fell to their knees and sat down.

“Did something happen?”

“Amazingly strong undulations of Darkness came from the direction of the village elder’s house and it caused my consciousness to become cloudy nya. I didn’t notice that it was Luciel-sama and Lionel-sama who were approaching.”

“I thought you were an enemy for using magic all of the sudden but my consciousness cleared so I halted at once.”

If the Darkness Spirit goes on a rampage, a village or a small town would easily descend into chaos.

Even though being told that fact caused me to think, the condition of their bodies took priority.

“...The Paladin squad will arrive tomorrow so we’ll remain here and search. You 2 can go take a nap first.”

““Yes!””

The 2 of them entered the village elder’s house.

Then, Lionel glanced at me and asked.

“Did you realize something?”

“Yeah. I understood that, apparently, if we are not able to cope with the emergence of the demon race, the Empire might make their move.”

“...So it’s true... I will serve to protect only Luciel-sama.”

While feeling out-of-place as the atmosphere that Lionel gave off was different from the usual, I told him the direction we would be taking from now on.

“Yeah. Even so, we have an overwhelming lack of people so I plan to increase the

number of my allies.”

“...Looks like it is going to become busy.”

“Yeah. I’ll have Lionel work too so please train yourself well.”

“Yes!”

I don’t understand Lionel’s feelings but his expression looks like it became softer compared to before and the day gradually became bright enough to see the village’s condition.

As Lionel and I watched the village from that spot, right before the sun rose up to the sky, 3 of them including Estia came out of the village elder’s house.

“Estia, how is your body condition?”

“Yes, it is fine. I’m sorry for troubling you.”

Apart from the Darkness Spirit, there’s no problem with Estia but would it really be alright to bring Estia to Meratoni like this?

I ended up having such a thought.

I refreshed my feelings and looked at Cathy and Kefin and while the 2 of them looked normal, I asked about their condition for now before giving instructions for today.

“What about the 2 of you?”

“Complete recovery nya.”

“No problems.”

“Very well. After we finish our meal after this, we’ll search this house one more time to look for any clues on anything that disappeared here and also ask the villagers some questions.”

““““Yes!”““““

After our meals, we didn’t find anything special when we searched the village elder’s house.

Even so, the demons that transformed into the village elder and the villager had often

been seen talking with people from the outside.

When we investigated up to that point, the Paladin squad arrived so we handed over the scene to them and departed for Meratoni.

“It wasn’t the Valkyrie Paladin Corps nya.”

“What a pity.”

Why have Cathy and Kefin been attacking me lately?

When I asked that, Lionel looked at the 2 of them with a serious expression and asked.

“Cathy and Kefin, do you 2 want to get married?”

A bomb that shocked even me was dropped.

That abrupt remark caused the grinning faces of the 2 of them to stiffen.

“...What do you mean?”

“Luciel-sama, do you consent to the 2 of them forming a family?”

“...If they both really think so then, of course, I’ll allow it but...”

“This time, because the demon race have appeared, I don’t think that the peaceful times will last forever.”

“...I understand Lionel’s thinking but even if I release you 2 from slavery and if you 2 get married, I will still have you 2 remain as my retainers you know?”

“Of course nya.”

“I have my own dreams as well so I will be following you.”

Lionel looked at the 2 of them with an indescribable expression and then looked at me and sighed.

“I’m the one who wants to sigh. It would be difficult to immediately find replacements for the 2 of them and even if the demon race have appeared, it’s not as if the danger would strengthen all of the sudden right? Lionel, for now, you can focus on thinking about your rematch with Instructor Broad.”

“...Understood.”

After that, needless to say, due to the bomb Lionel dropped, the somewhat awkward atmosphere continued throughout the duration of the ride until we arrived at Meratoni.

Chapter 146

S-rank healer Luciel

When I finally caught sight of Meratoni, my tension gradually began to rise.

Normally I wouldn't be so tensed but Fornoir's condition wasn't well so I was currently in the carriage.

Lionel rode in front as the escort while Cathy and Kefin sat in the coachman seat but they didn't speak a single word.

Estia was looking down the whole time as if she did not want to see the outside and she only react when I spoke to her, but even then, the conversation did not bounce back.

I'm sure it's not bad of me to wish for this strange atmosphere to end.

Perhaps because we were approaching the gate, Lionel was corresponding with them but the outside gradually became noisy.

"What's wrong?"

"Apparently, an imposter using Luciel-sama's name had passed by just now."

"....."

I got off the carriage in silence and called out to the gate soldier.

"Good afternoon. I'll be going to the Healer's Guild and Adventurer's Guild from here so you can come along. That's right! I should walk once in a while."

I was worried about Estia but her complexion became better when she got off the carriage so I decided to continue walking like that.

I stored the carriage and ushered the horses into the Hermit's stable before displaying my Healer's Guild S-rank card just in case and walked towards the Healer's Guild.

"Luciel-sama, please treat me again."

“Please teach the healers.”

“You should have contacted me if you’re coming back. I’ll prepare clothes as present the next time.”

“Luciel-kun, are you able to drink alcohol now?”

“A new restaurant has opened you know.”

Seeing my figure, everyone on the streets of Meratoni called out to me.

It’s a nice thing to be welcomed like this.

It felt like I’ve been treated gingerly lately so I was honestly pleased.

The complexion of the gate soldier from earlier was changing from blue to white but I walked without paying attention to it.

Kefin reluctantly asked the gate soldier about information on my imposter but for me, rather than that, my joy was welling up from being able to walk and view the townscape.

From buildings built with magic to those expanded by Dwarves, it was very fun to see this city that seemed like it gradually expanded by using any method available.

But, it’s unfair for me to be the only person feeling refreshed so I first headed towards the Healer’s Guild.

If possible, I hoped to meet a pushy person like Krull-san who would be able to blow away this atmosphere.

“Luciel-sama, that’s the one. The one that entered Meratoni city using Luciel-sama’s name.”

I could see with just a glance what a splendidly decorated carriage it was.

“What a luxurious carriage. Well, it’s possible that we have the same name so for now, let’s enter the Healer’s Guild.”

“””Yes!”””

When I smiled at everyone, Lionel and the others also gave mischievous smiles.

I felt the atmosphere return to usual.

It looks like the owner of the carriage did a good job of blocking the road.

Is it alright for me to overlook the usage of my name if it's like this?

"Do you think if there's anybody in the carriage."

"There are 3 people including the coachman."

"What do we do?"

I decided to leave it to the 3 of them.

"Let's see... what do they intend to do by using Luciel-sama's name."

"Luciel-sama and Lionel-sama are watching nya."

Cathy and Kefin charged into the carriage.

"What are you thinking stopping a carriage in such a location nya?"

"What do you intend to do if we get injured!!"

Looking at the 2 of them act out the role of B-grade movie scoundrels totally picking a fight, I almost burst out laughing but I withstood the urge.

A lady from inside the carriage and a man sitting on the coachman seat retorted.

"Lowly beasts!! Present in this carriage is the S-rank Healer Luciel-sama. If you beasts are making noise, are you looking to be punished?"

The man that got off from the coachman seat acted like he was about to draw his sword but I could only see him as a small-time delinquent.

"Ha~ that's why I hate the barbaric beasts. Luciel-sama with his broad heart will definitely forgive them. Be ashamed of your own foolishness and go home."

I wonder why? I'm feeling super irritated.

Are they part of the human supremacy group?

"Lionel, can such a thing be found everywhere?"

"I think so. In the past, I recall cutting down people who did the same thing."

Even if we don't include his followers, people will come for this person's head if he looks down on people that much.

But, this time, the ones who set the trap were Cathy and Kefin so I won't intervene.

"That's right. I'll need to interrogate him as to why he would need to impersonate me. Moreover to do so in this important place that is like a second home to me."

I was stopped from approaching them.

"There are witnesses here so let's watch for a little longer."

I was saved by Lionel's composure.

"Is this your atonement for dropping the bomb on those 2?"

"Yes. For some reason, I was impatient at that time."

Perhaps the undulations of Darkness showed its effect.

I decided to ask the Darkness Spirit the next time it showed up.

"...Alright. Just in case, Lionel, be wary of any people who might have entered the Healer's Guild."

"Understood."

We cut our conversation and looked ahead as the situation gradually heated up but the 2 of them looked extremely happy.

"They're a good combination huh?"

"Yeah."

While we remained as spectators, beside us, the gate soldier was trembling.

Soon, the man who drew his sword sliced at Kefin.

Then, the woman in front of Cathy boasted.

“That’s why I warned you... this is what happens when beasts defy the great human race. Right?”

“.....”

“What are you dazing out for. Make this cat the rust on your sword too ?!”

Cathy’s figure had already disappeared by the time the woman’s eyes returned to her.

“She fled huh... this corpse is a nuisance.”

The man leaned back towards the woman as if entrusting his body.

“Hey, don’t get conceited.”

The man who was leaning towards the side crashed onto the ground.

“Eh?”

The next instant, Cathy’s knife hand struck the base of the woman’s neck from behind and she lost consciousness.”

“No big deal nya.”

“Are the guards of the S-rank Healer small fries?”

“The one inside, move the carriage out of the way nya.”

Perhaps he could not endure the provocation from the 2 of them, a man alighted from the carriage.

“Aren’t you 2 considerably strong. Are you guys new adventurers who just entered this city? To go showing off your ability, perhaps you 2 want to become my followers?”

A lanky man came out.

“He would certainly resemble me if he didn’t train but... why is he so confident?”

“...His height and hair color are similar but his face looks different too so it’s a wonder how he impersonated you in Meratoni.”

Lionel and I were astonished by his nerves.

It was no wonder why we were curious why he didn't get exposed.

"If he's been performing fraud then I should properly gather intelligence..."

It was becoming a headache for me but as expected, perhaps due to the noise, people were beginning to gather.

"So why did you stop your carriage here nya?"

"Because I am an S-rank Healer. Naturally, you know of my name right?"

"Nope, I don't."

"This is exactly why stinking beasts are troublesome. I am the S-rank Healer Luciel."

He boastfully named himself.

"...It's subtly different and various aspects are distorted. Even so, there's no way he can be an S-rank Healer."

"Shall I capture him?"

"No, I'll go over. Lionel, don't let anyone who comes out of the Healer's Guild get away."

"Yes."

"Gate soldier, come along with me too."

"Ye, yes."

When we approached, perhaps Cathy and Kefin were still amusing themselves, they gave vassal homage to me.

"What's this? You're the man who trains these beasts? Who do you think I am? I am the S-rank Healer. Your beast did this to my retainers. Originally, your head would have instantly left your neck but I am broad minded so I will let you off with just 10 white gold coins."

"I see. If that's the case, let's make a pledge."

"Pledge?"

“Words that are sworn to the Gods?”

“Of course I know that. I’m asking what do you intend to pledge.”

“Please prove that you are an S-rank Healer. If you do so, I will pay you 10 white gold coins as compensation. However, if you are not the real one but a fraud, then I will have you compensate for all the deceit you’ve done for your whole life.”

“Hmph. Alright. But, do you actually hold 10 white gold coins...” *Jingle*

“As you can see, I do have it. So, please make your pledge.”

“Alright. If I am not an S-rank Healer, I will compensate for my sins.”

He loudly swore.

“There you go. So, I’ll leave the rest to you?”

“Yes! I am terribly sorry for this occasion.”

“You, what are you doing?”

“Luciel-dono, nice to meet you, I am Saint Schull’s Allied Nations S-rank Healer affiliated with the Church Headquarters, Luciel. It seems that I am not the only S-rank Healer in this world.”

The surrounding onlookers cheered for me and they hooted the guy who named himself Luciel.

“Wha, the real deal!!”

“Yes. Later, I believe you will be interrogated together with your accomplices. So please be captured without worries.”

Thus, the man hung his head in resignation as the soldiers who came running as support captured him together with his accomplices and transported them to the guard station.

“I didn’t expect an imposter of Luciel-sama to appear nya.”

“To have your name impersonated, Luciel-sama can now be considered famous.”

“It’s fine if I’m famous for good deeds but it’s not gratifying to be impersonated.”

The atmosphere improved and their smiles had returned.

Thus, I got even with him for impersonating my name and it would be fine if he just compensates for the frauds he performed.

With this, I'll be able to concentrate on Lionel and Instructor Broad's mock battle.

Then, Estia surprisingly spoke.

"Luciel-sama is popular in this city too."

"Is that so? It would be great if that's true. At any rate, this city is something like my second home."

"...I'm envious."

Estia had a somewhat lonely expression despite her smile and it would be great if she found her foothold somewhere.

As I thought about that, we entered the Healer's Guild and there was a man tied up in a bundle with Krull-san stepping on him.

While feeling my face cramp up due to the sudden shock, I somehow squeezed out a greeting.

"Good afternoon Krull-san. If you're busy I can go out and come back in again?"

"Eh?! If it isn't Luciel-kun. Don't tell me this person is?"

"That's the accomplice of some man called Luciel. He was just arrested."

"That's great. I'll go deal with this for a bit so please wait a while. Hohoho."

Krull-san lifted the man up and left the Healer's guild.

"Who was that lady?"

"She should be the Guildmaster of this branch but... I wonder what's her position now?"

I could only reply Lionel's question with a question, even though I had achieved the initial goal of regaining the usual atmosphere, we waited at the Healer's Guild resting room without feeling relaxed for some reason.

Chapter 147

Second home

I didn't really have any important reason for coming to the Healer's Guild but I felt that my luck was good for being able to quickly capture the scam group that was using my name.

After a short while, Krull returned but I could easily tell from her face that she was abnormally excited.

"Welcome back, Luciel-kun."

Krull-san's radiant smile made me feel nostalgic in some respects.

"I'm home... rather, is it alright for you to be here?"

"Of course. So, who are these people?"

She scanned through Lionel and the others once before her smile grew wider when she stopped at Estia.

"These are my retainers Lionel, Cathy, and Kefin as well as my subordinate Estia."

"Luciel-kun has changed after all. Guys, various things will happen and it will be easy to get involved in them when you are around Luciel-kun so please be careful."

Was it because there were beastmen inside my party? Or was it because there wasn't a single person wearing the armor of Priest Knights or Paladins or robes? I couldn't tell.

"Krull-san... you're not my mother and you even say it like it's my nature to drag people into trouble."

When I refuted with a weak smile, she made a slightly angry expression and glared at me.

“I’m still an Oneesan okay. If you say such words when our age is just over 10 years different, you still have to grow through various experiences in the world. Besides, can you claim that you aren’t dragged into troubles?”

That was strangely persuasive so I could only apologize.

I reset my mind and decided to explore the current situation.

Even though a person assuming my name appeared, as long as this town is peaceful, I have at least 2 months of training time.

“Has anything strange happened in Meratoni lately? Limited to those that I don’t know within this past slightly more than a year duration?”

“There has been. Since it is Luciel-kun, I think you would find out when you go to the Adventurer’s Guild later but lately, there seems to have been an excessive amount of adventurers complaining about injuries and status abnormalities.”

There’re so many wounded? Doesn’t that mean something pretty bad is happening?

“...But there are enough Healers right?”

“There are. Even so, it’s still insufficient... apparently, monsters with poison, paralysis and petrify abilities appear regularly.”

The numbers have been increasing year by year and there are people to properly instruct them but they still have a shortage of manpower... just how unfavorable is the situation?

I wanted to exclaim that but I realized that even Instructor Broad would be on site if the situation was bad so I felt uneasy.

But, I’ve not really heard about monster attacks that cause status abnormality in Meratoni.

I recall that the number of poisoned patients I treated was a small enough number to be counted... now that I think about it, it was limited to the time when I treated Bazzan and the others in the past.

If that’s the case, did the monsters come from the direction of the mines?

“...Did they come from the direction of the mines?”

“Yeah. You knew about it? I’m told that beyond that mine lies the Labyrinth Nation Grandol and apparently, they are coming from there.”

Krull-san gave a surprised expression when I asked and she nodded many times.

“...By any chance, have I already been dragged into the trouble?”

“If it’s Luciel-kun, you’ll be able to convert that into your own strength right?”

“What over evaluation! Leaving that aside, since the Healers have been healing every day, their skill level should have risen right?”

For some reason, Krull-san was looking at me with a joyful smile as if having found hope.

...I understood that she was a woman with a strong backbone who was getting rid of her anxiety through me.

As I gave a sigh, I enquired on the Healers’ ability to respond and the reply was troubling.

“That’s true but if [Recover] is cast, it would treat poison or paralysis or sleep curse but it’s not as if it is effective to all of them right? I believe Luciel-kun knows that too?”

“What’s with that defective magic?”

Even the Healers that I brought along to Ienith should be able to treat all status abnormalities together at once.

“...If it’s because they are not using it correctly, then the main problem would be the lack of a proper mentor. In the first place, even Luciel-kun’s [Area High Heal] that I’ve heard rumors of is treated as heresy among the Healers.”

Heresy? Certainly, it’s thanks to the God of Healing’s blessing but treating it as heresy doesn’t sound nice at all.

Despite that, Krull-san was finding something amusing as she was smiling the whole time.

“...I don’t get it. Ha~ are there any other strange happenings?”

“If you count the number of kids coming here to become Healers decreasing this year as a strange happening? Although, due to the influence of Luciel-kun, a large number of people came to register as Healers in Meratoni these few years.”

“Is that so?... If that’s the case, maybe I’ll perform some healing at the Adventurer’s Guild underground area tomorrow and guide the Healers at the same time?”

“Really? That’s why I love you.”

She looked like she was about to kiss me on my cheek so, this time, I evaded.

“As expected, Lumina-sama’s kiss is better right?”

“?! How did you know?”

It’s quite a recent event.

It hasn’t even been at least 10 days and the word regarding the Knight Corps expedition shouldn’t even be out yet.

“You shouldn’t underestimate the Healer’s Guild’s maiden network.”

Krull-san’s triumphant wink shaved away at my mental strength.

Since the conversation had roughly ended, I requested for her help with arranging for an inn.

“I thought of stopping at an inn after this but could I ask for your help?”

“Sure. Is an inn where it is near the Adventurer’s Guild and where Priest Knights stayed previously okay?”

“Yes. Thank you in advance. I’ll head to the Adventurer’s Guild now.”

“Okay. Also, please provide me with a lot of interesting topics.”

“Hahaha I’ll do my best.”

I gave a weak laugh and left the Healer’s Guild.

If Krull-san was an inn proprietress, I’m sure the inn would thrive.

My thoughts ended up drifting in that direction.

When we left, surprisingly, the first one to speak was Estia.

“It seems that everyone likes Luciel-sama. That woman just now too... I feel somewhat envious.”

“Krull-san? If Estia talked, she would have probably conversed with you kindly. I’ll allow you to take independent action so would you like to go and talk to her?”

“...I’m fine with if we meet next time.”

She faced away as if trying to conceal her slightly reddened face.

Maybe she wants to be spoiled to make up for not having the chance to be spoiled by parents.

It seemed vaguely so.

“Well then Lionel, do you really want to meet Instructor Broad while remaining as a slave?”

If it’s against an old combat rival, wouldn’t it be better to hold on to his former general title? That’s what went through my mind.

“...Yeah. I have sent a letter to him and he should understand my thinking. Furthermore, I am satisfied with my position as Luciel-sama’s retainer.”

Being told that, I ended up feeling delighted and couldn’t say anymore.

“When did you send a letter... oh well. As what we’ve heard just now at the Healer’s Guild, if the adventurers are struggling right now, I don’t know if you would be able to have your mock battle immediately. Even so, I want to see the mock battle between the 2 of you so I’ll do my very best.”

“Sen’oni (War Demon) and Hayate (Gale)... sounds amazing.”

“I’ve not seen it before too so I’m looking forward to it nya.”

Kefin said both their nicknames with a childish smile so he probably researched their past.

I could feel Cathy's intent to witness it as a warrior.

Only Estia was restlessly surveying the city of Meratoni.

While calming the gradually rising tension, we entered the Adventurer's Guild that was directly beside the Healer's Guild.

However, what awaited me was an unexpected scene.

That's right. Because Meratoni's Adventurer's Guild was overflowing with injured people.

The exhausted adventurers looked at our direction but nobody realized it was me.

Why's that even though my face didn't change nor did my armor?

However, observing carefully, there were only young adventurers there and there weren't any adventurers that I knew.

And the canteen looked like it was not open either.

"Let's go to the reception."

I told Lionel and the others and walked over to speak to a young receptionist that I only have an impression of maybe or maybe not greeting her once before.

"Excuse me. I'm E-rank Adventurer Luciel but is Broad-san or Garba-san or Grulga-san or Nanaera-san or Mirina-san or Melneru-san around?"

I judged that I would be able to understand the current situation in detail if I meet with any of them.

"Erm sorry but with the current situation now, the executives told us to not have anyone bother them..."

Without knowing my identity, she looked like she was firmly performing her job.

But I was surprised when she could not continue half-way through after she succumbed to the bloodthirst pressure emanating from Lionel from behind.

It looked like it would take some time so I decided to use my trump card.

“Then, could I request that you tell Instructor Broad that S-rank Healer Luciel has arrived?”

“I, I’ll be right back.”

The receptionist girl ran down to the underground training ground in a hurry.

Then, when the appraising gazes from the adventurers intensified, Instructor Broad appeared like a gale.

“Luciel, nice timing. Quickly come treat the people downstairs.”

The slightly sweaty Instructor Broad grabbed me and tried to drag me underground but Lionel stopped him.

“Whirlwind, wait a moment.”

“Ou. So Sen’oni really became Luciel’s retainer. It doesn’t matter now so let’s go down.”

His excessively high tension and desperation looked like he wanted to prevent somebody’s death.

It transmitted to me that the situation had reached the point where he was grasping at straws.

I nodded at everyone and hurried to the training ground after Instructor Broad.

“This is the first I’ve seen something like this since Ienith. There are petrification and paralysis... there’s even weakened state?”

A couple of Healers were around but the recovery amount was not sufficient.

“Instructor Broad, please divide the people into those injured and those who have abnormal status. Of course, I’ll be charging a fee.”

“I understand. Sorry but please treat Grulga.”

“Eh?”

Grulga-san got injured?

I couldn't wrap my head around it.

For Grulga-san who boasts of his defense of steel to get injured...

His body was carbonized as far as my eyes could see to the point that it was a mystery as to how he was still alive.

For the time being, I properly confirmed that he had his limbs and hummed the chant for [High Heal] and [Extra Heal] before activating [Dispel] and [Recover] at the same time.

A vortex of light rapidly wrapped around Grulga-san before his carbonized arms and the slashes on his body completely healed in no time.

After confirming that the recovery was complete, I used purification magic to remove the solidified blood and returned him to a clean condition when tremendous cheers resounded across the training ground.

"It's because Grulga-san is my life benefactor. Now then, Instructor Broad, please help me with what I requested just now. Also, please gather the healers. Before that."

I applied the same 4 magic that I applied on Grulga-san onto Instructor Broad.

"...Luciel... thank you."

Immediately after I heard those words said in a whisper, Instructor Broad's voice echoed across the Adventurer's Guild.

"Those who want to be saved please line up properly. Those with injuries and those with abnormal statuses please line up separately. For Healers, apparently, the S-rank Healer would provide guidance on healing."

After he announced only that, the lines began to form all at once.

"The person capable of organizing adventurers... is that low-profile person who refused to be an officer huh."

Lionel muttered with a weak smile as he looked at Instructor Broad and he looked slightly happy.

I began treating from those who looked like they were about to die whereas for the

injured people, there weren't anyone else who needed treatment after 5 times of [Area High Heal].

"I'm supposed to do this the day after tomorrow but since there are many among you who do not understand the model to treating abnormal statuses, I will tell you all the image I use. If you memorize it by repetition after this, you'll be able to reach Holy attribute magic skill level X even while you're still young. So please learn it properly."

Many of the ones I was teaching were young Healers and while they were overflowing with motivation, their skill level was low.

Even so, perhaps it's been a long time since I've carefully taught people, unexpectedly, I might have also wanted to have this kind of time as well.

While having such thoughts, around the time I finished treatment, I felt like I was about to reach magical power depletion for the first time after a long time but I somehow held out.

"Luciel, thank you for the hard work. You truly helped me this time."

Returning to his original bear-like Wolf beastman appearance, Grulga-san gave me words of appreciation while looking healthy and well.

"We help one another out in times of need. Leaving that aside, are you fine getting up so soon?"

"Yeah. Since my sturdy body is my only selling point."

Normally, one should not be able to remain standing after losing that much blood but I realized that Grulga-san was a superhuman after all.

"...Even so, for Grulga-san to suffer from that degree of injuries, wasn't it actually quite a crisis?"

"Well, yeah. Well, I'll make a feast to celebrate our reunion so stay for a meal before you leave."

"Okay, I'll take up your offer... by the way, Instructor Broad, what's the reason for the unusual amount of injuries?"

I turned from Grulga-san to Instructor Broad.

For the 2 of them to suffer from this degree of injuries is not normal at all.

It reminded me of our battle with the Demons.

“...Monsters are overflowing from the labyrinth at Grandol. There are high ranking adventurers there so it was calm for a moment but the ripples reached Meratoni.”

“It doesn’t seem to be limited to that though?”

“...Yeah. For some reason, the mines lead to Grandol so monsters flow towards here day after day with no end in sight.”

It was like saying the mines disappeared and Grandol came invading.

If it’s not dealt with properly, instead of the Empire, Grandol might wage war against Saint Schull’s Allied Nations. With that fact as a shield, I could imagine that the attack from Grandol would be a great opportunity for the other countries who lie about their allegiance.

“I only came to watch Lionel and Instructor’s mock battle though...”

“...Can I request of you?”

Instructor and the others were defeated because there wasn’t anyone to heal them.

Without that problem, there probably aren’t any enemy they can’t beat.

Thinking about safety, with Instructor Broad and Lionel forming a united front, I instantly realized that the risk I would face would nearly be zero.

“I’m not a disciple who will reject Instructor’s request. Furthermore, this place is a special city to me. However, if Instructor and Lionel don’t properly protect me, I won’t be able to heal you all.”

“Alright. Let’s have a kickoff party that will last until tomorrow.”

Thus, naming it as a kickoff party instead of a combat strategy meeting, we tasted Grulga-san’s dinner while drinking mead to prepare our bodies for tomorrow’s adventure.

Chapter 148

Strength of a different dimension

The next day after the drinking party called a kickoff party, Instructor Broad and Grulga-san stopped me as I was about to drink Object X.

“Luciel, I’ll tell you honestly, it won’t be strange if your level increases by a lot. The monsters this time are that strong.”

“Object X is certainly effective but for Luciel who has been continually drinking it, it shouldn’t be that effective anymore?”

“That’s true but because my level has not been increasing since around the time I defeated the Red Dragon.”

It would be easy to ignore their advice but the 2 of them have once walked the sluggish level growth path where I was struggling on so there was value in listening to them.

“Relax, your level will definitely increase. This time, whether it’s magic strength or magical power amount, Luciel will have to continuously heal us after all.”

He didn’t tell me anything special but I somehow felt that my level would indeed rise.

But, at the same time, I could also read his thoughts.

“...I’ll also have to maintain some reserve of magical power right?”

“Sorry but yes.”

There was a determination in Instructor Broad’s eyes.

“I understand. Well, please suppress the enemy so that I will not be targeted.”

“Leave it to me.”

We boarded the horse carriage and departed together with the other adventurers for

the mine country border that has been lost.

“The vanguard will be Kefin and Instructor Broad, the second row will be Lionel and the third row will be Cathy and me as well as Estia, while the last row will be Grulga-san.”

“...Is there a purpose for that setup?”

“Yes. I believe Shisho will not fall behind even against monsters that are fast while Kefin is able to detect and disarm traps.

Lionel specializes in close to middle-range attacks and his defense is tough too so he will be my guard in front of me.

To my left and right will be the quick-footed Cathy and Estia who is able to search for enemies whereas even if enemies come from behind, they will be more than enough to support Grulga-san.

With Grulga-san at the back, he will be able to view the overall balance of the whole party and I think that is the safest configuration for me.”

“...It’s amazing how you are able to assert that so refreshingly. Good grief, your true nature never changes.”

Shisho’s cheek muscle was twitching slightly.

Since there weren’t any objections from my surroundings, maybe they have given up but I’d like to think that they felt that those were the best positions for them.

“That’s right, Instructor Broad. Because I still don’t want to die yet. Moreover, this is the best combat formation so that nobody dies.”

“Hou. You’ve become capable of making a good expression.”

He patted my shoulder while giving a different smile from just now and it felt like some other emotion was placed into that hand.

“That’s because I’ve been strictly training him for this one year in place of Whirlwind.”

Lionel declared confidently and it was clearly a provocation.

“Sen’oni, I believe I’ve already mentioned yesterday that I was the one who laid the foundation.”

For some reason, their competition about their disciple had been going on since yesterday.

I bet they're on good terms with each other.

That's what I thought.

It would probably take some time before this ends so I decided to ask what I wanted to ask first.

"Now then, we ended up not talking about monsters much yesterday so in the end, do the monsters that overflow out of the labyrinth transform into magic stones after they are defeated?"

"They won't. Of course, the corpses would remain so there would be magic stones but it's better to think of them as regular monsters."

Even though they come from the labyrinth? Is something else needed for it to happen?

Or does the labyrinth give birth to monsters from within the memories of Galdardia? I'm getting more and more confused.

If other people were transferred too... I thought up to that point before sealing that thought within myself.

I had a cryptic premonition that it would really become true if I voiced it out in words.

"...But if the monsters are defeated outdoors, won't the smell of blood excite monsters and more and more would gather from a wide area?"

"We have no choice but to burn herbs from the Herbalist Guild to scatter the smell..."

It seemed like he had something come to mind.

Even so, I was wondering why the Magician Guild did not develop a magic to do that.

"...I'll purify the site when I reach there. I'll treat the injured next and annihilating the enemies will come after that... if the enemies would wait for me though."

I prayed that nobody would die even if people get injured as I swayed along with the carriage.

However, there weren't any indications of us arriving at all.

"Incidentally, how long would this journey take?"

"Oh. It would take about half a day at this speed."

I made light of the distance thinking that it would be unexpectedly near seeing the carriage move at a leisurely pace but I should have confirmed the fact beforehand.

I told everyone to get off after I heard that.

"It was the right choice to clarify my doubt early. We'll proceed after we transfer to another carriage."

"It should be the same regardless of what carriage we ride."

"You'll understand after we transfer. I may not like to go to dangerous places but I also hate to let others die for no good reason."

Shisho and Grulga-san were puzzled at my words but they were immediately convinced after we exchanged the carriage for the one we usually rode on.

After that, we ended up pulling ahead and left the other adventurers behind but human lives were at stake so I didn't compromise either.

Well, the destination didn't change so it shouldn't be a problem.

"Wouldn't it have cost quite a sum of money to construct something like this?"

Shisho and Grulga-san looked anxious but it's indeed true that it would be expensive if I ordered it normally from Dolan.

While imagining so, I honestly replied Shisho who was paying an undue amount of attention to it and Grulga-san who was slightly concerned too.

"It requires magic stones but this was something built by the Technology Development Department of Luciel Company so the cost was only magic stones and Treant trees."

"...In addition to being a Healer and the Representative for Ienith, you've been doing

various other stuff too?”

“Well, it’s the result of the natural course of events and good luck after getting entangled in situations.”

I replied with a laugh as Shisho gave a surprised expression.

I didn’t show any other expressions apart from that.

As if we transferred from a local train to an express train, we could proceed without stopping and approached the mine in about 3 hours instead of half a day.

“Make a carriage like this for me too after this.”

“Sure. But we’ll be walking from here.”

I could see flying objects approaching from afar.

We immediately descended from the carriage and Shisho and Grulga-san were shocked when I collected the carriage and stored the horses in the Hermit’s Stable.

“That’s the Hermit Series!?”

“Even though we only found 1 after our long years of adventuring, to have already found one, you sure possess strong luck.” It’s not strong luck but Great Luck though.

“Well, I was lucky.”

“Luck... if that’s the case then you should hold on to this.”

It was a worn out key.

“Shisho, this is?”

When I held out the key that Shisho was grasping in surprise, Shisho told me the name of the key.”

“It’s the Hermit’s Coffin from the Hermit Series.”

Coffin? Coffin?!

“It somehow sounds like a cursed name though?”

“Kukuku. Well, that’s how it is. You can only put people who have lost consciousness in here.”

Because it’s a coffin?

“Unconscious? Meaning even in the middle of sleep?”

“Yes. But once their consciousness returns, regardless of the situation outside, the key would open and they would be expelled out.”

Meaning it is an item either for brain dead or paralyzed people or to allow people to suddenly appear while fighting bosses?

But if that’s the case, would time stop if I store it in the item bag?

No, the Hermit’s Stable is fine even if I place it in the item bag but I’ll need to verify what would happen if I did so with this key.

“...Have you used it before?”

“...Only once. But, I just can’t think of a way to make use of this. That’s why I’ll entrust it to you Luciel. If it’s you, you’ll be able to use it well. That’s what I think.”

It felt like Shisho pushed the key to me in a way such that he could not see it but I didn’t understand why.

“...Understood. I’ll humbly use it.”

“Yeah. Well then, shall we shoot that flying monster down?”

“Yes.”

Looking at the flying lion that was right before our eyes, I immediately activated [Area Barrier] and everyone moved all at once.

“Luciel-sama, please give me a spear that is alright to toss.”

Reacting to Lionel’s words, I tossed him the Holy Silver Spear, Lionel grabbed it and threw it at the flying lion in almost no time at all.

It flew with amazing momentum but because there was some distance, the flying lion

evaded it... and its wing was cut and it fell down.

For a moment, I could see Shisho's figure but it disappeared immediately, Lionel swung his Flame Greatsword and a vortex of flame fell on the lion at once, the instant it had a direct hit, the flames disappeared along with a blast and the lion's head and body separated.

"Well, it's something like this? Sen'oni, I see you're quite capable at subjugating monsters."

"You're speed and sword technique doesn't seem to have rusted either, Whirlwind."

Both of them showed the strength of a different dimension but there was something that caught my eye.

"Lionel, you've become stronger way too suddenly. You weren't that strong during the fight with the Red Dragon or the Demon?"

"During the Red Dragon battle, I was not in my regular condition and there was also the worry of breaking the equipment. The other day, there was a possibility that I would destroy the village if I released my full strength but there wasn't any such restriction this time."

"...Do you feel pain in your body?"

"There's no pain."

That kind of movement was possible because his intent to not lose to Instructor Broad overrode his brain's restriction on movements in fear of injuries.

That might be the reason.

It's as if he's on the verge of awakening to become a person who hates to lose.

"Luciel, you have no comments for me?"

"I already recognize Shisho as an inhuman person. However, I wonder just what kind of enemy would be able to inflict injuries on Shisho who is so strong."

It was Grulga-san who answered my question instead of Instructor Broad.

"Three Chimeras which are stronger than the Manticore that has fallen down over there appeared. Even Broad can't fight at full strength while protecting the

adventurers.”

“And yet Grulga you were also bravely volunteering your body to act as a wall to help the adventurers which was why you were at death’s door so who are you to comment.”

Maybe because he didn’t intend for it to be exposed to me, they were finding faults in each other like in a children’s fight.

It seems that rather than the strength of the enemy, these 2 were injured to that extent because they were protecting the adventurers.

Even so, have the adventurers not been given Object X to drink lately?

“Instructor Broad and Grulga-san drank Object X in the past right?”

My remark caused the air to solidify.

Then, for some reason, the 2 began to exchange eye contact but I understood that they wanted to avert the topic so I reluctantly asked something else simpler.

“...I feel that it would have been solved instantly if you 2 subjugated it while other high-rank adventurers gave support but was that not possible?”

“...Chimeras are sly so they aim for the weak. Moreover, it would have been all right if those were the only monsters but, we also only knew about it a little later, there were quite a number of monsters that cause status abnormalities. The adventurers were needed to suppress those monsters.”

I honestly felt that it would be best to quickly reach that dangerous site and secure the safety of the area.

As far as I know, there isn’t any enemy that the strongest Shisho and his rival the awakened Lionel can’t defeat.

I genuinely thought so.

“Then, shall we quicken the pace?”

Without being able to hold down my high spirits, I stored the Manticore in my magic bag and began running.

However, their pacing was quicker than mine so they immediately lined up with me and formed the formation I designated.

I continued running while laughing.

10 minutes later, we reached the entrance to the mine but I found that the ground at only that location had disappeared as if it had sunken in.

I discovered as we gradually approached that what awaited me was not monsters but a large sealed door.

Chapter 149

Request

Adventurers, Garba-san and Warabis who I honestly didn't consider capable of contributing as combat strength were exterminating the monsters.

We plunged into the monster horde as if intending to run through them and while I didn't touch anything at all, a mountain of corpses was formed.

The adventurers worked together to collect the mountain of corpses.

The scene was so terribly smelly that I wished for rain to fall and wash away everything but clear weather was spread across the skies so my expectations were dashed.

Therefore, I advanced while applying purification magic but, as to be expected, I couldn't help but hold my head from the thoughts of the effort required to erase the unusual mountain of corpses and its smell at the very front line.

"Grulga!! You're safe?"

Garba-san passed by in front of my eyes before I knew it and hugged Grulga-san.

Since he found out that his younger brother was on the verge of death immediately after he returned from Ienith, I believe many of the monsters suffered from terrible deaths.

It was obvious from the deathly expression on Warabis's face.

He most likely kept Grulga-san's slave Warabis around so that he would know when Grulga-san dies.

I could see that his thorough personality has been further polished since Ienith.

"Yeah. I was kept alive by Luciel."

Garba-san reacted to Grulga-san's words and looked over here as he thanked me with a smile.

He was worried about Grulga-san to the point that he did not notice my face just now.

“Luciel-kun, thank you so much for helping Grulga.”

“We help each other out in times of need. I was indebted to you in Ienith.”

He was making a seriously delighted expression but I felt that he was a really dutiful person as Grulga-san is my benefactor after all.

“That’s right. Everyone was sad that you couldn’t send us off. You did well to grasp the hearts of that many beastmen.”

“...That’s because of the help I received from the 2 of you.”

I confirmed the situation while still regretting bringing up the topic that I didn’t want to touch.

However, Garba-san looked at Instructor Broad with a sharp glint in his eyes.

“Moving on from that, Broad, it’s good that the Chimera was defeated but stop neglecting command and plunging into the fray to defeat it like that. It’s a nuisance.”

“You don’t have to glare at me like that. So, what’s the current situation?”

Shisho too... he most likely snapped when his companion Grulga-san became a bloody mass but I suppose that is a disqualification as a commander.

Well, I could immediately tell that Garba-san was not seriously mad.

Since I totally couldn’t sense any bloodthirst or anger.

Instructor Broad also understood that and quickly confirmed the situation.

As far as I could see in our surroundings, the people were no longer fighting monsters but seemed to be stripping off materials.

“Monsters are gathering from the surroundings but there aren’t any monsters that are that strong and the monsters that crawled out from the mine afterward weren’t anything special apart from their status abnormality attacks.”

It looked like the situation had mostly calmed down but are they still planning to remain in this location?

I complied to Instructor Broad's commands and watched over the location.

"I see. So then, was that raccoon dog useful?"

"Uh huh... slightly?"

Warabis's ability was to transform but he ends up instantly reverting to his original form.

I couldn't understand how that would be useful so I interrupted the conversation.

"I desperately burned herbs that would dissipate the smell pu~. I didn't want to be scolded anymore pu~."

...Warabis who's personality hadn't changed much replied.

"Warabis, how is life as a slave?"

"There no way slave life would be comfy... wait, why is Saint-sama here pu~?"

Warabis trembled just from the words I spoke.

I was shocked as to why he trembled to that extent.

"I'm not a Saint, my term in Ienith ended so I returned to Meratoni."

"It's a nightmare pu~. Immediately after Garba returns, even the pale light emitting demon also appears..."

I couldn't pick up on what Warabis muttered like a whisper but apparently Kefin and Cathy heard it and they directed sharp gazes at him.

I decided to stop devoting any more time and emotions into Warabis.

Then, I found the sealed door that I saw from a distance.

Why is it on a flat ground... I really couldn't wrap my head around why it was outdoors as I confirmed the situation.

"...When did the monsters withdraw from this site?"

Instructor Broad and Garba-san reacted to my words and Instructor Broad replied me.

“...I wonder, the monsters came from Grandol so perhaps the adventurers there annihilated the monsters that were excited? The strong monsters from the mine have been defeated so I think this place will be calm for now.”

It can't be helped that I asked as I don't want to die.

Leaving that aside, what do we do about that?

There was only one choice for me to choose.

“For now, there's no need to go around for healing duty right?”

“Yeah. It looks like somehow there aren't any who suffered from any severe injuries. Why do you ask?”

“There's a large door there but is there anyone who can see it?”

Everyone looked in the direction I pointed at but the reaction was extremely weak.

“Luciel-sama, don't tell me?”

Kefin was the first to realize.

Lionel and the others also looked at me with surprise but I wanted them to know that I was the one who was the most surprised.

“Yeah. A sealed door.”

“Luciel, what's there? What sealed door? Please explain in detail.”

I thought that as a guildmaster, Instructor Broad would know but apparently not.

I thought that it was fine to explain if it's Shisho and I was about to speak but I saw Estia and Warabis so I stopped my explanation.

“...Firstly, I won't talk with Warabis here. I can't talk about this other than to people I trust.”

“I guess it's a grave topic? If that's the case, I'll grab Warabis and leave.”

“Sorry Garba-san. Sorry, but Estia, could you leave too?”

“Yes. Understood.”

Garba-san grabbed the scruff of Warabis’s neck and left and Estia left following that. I still didn’t think that I would not be betrayed by Estia.

I planned to convey to them official information besides information on the sealed door.

Before that, I decided to use pledges that I prepared in advance.

“Not only Instructor Broad and Grulga-san, I want everyone to pledge. The compensation is a few minutes of memories starting from now. You will instantly lose these memories if you try to tell this to anyone in any way.”

“Understood. I have a right to know as a guildmaster.”

Instructor Broad said that and everyone took the pledge.

After the pledges ended, I began explaining.

“The sealed doors are doors that connect to the location where the dragons are sealed at. After I dispel the seal on the dragon, a large magic stone will appear around here. Please promise that absolutely nobody will touch it. If you don’t keep that promise, everyone will die.”

“...I don’t really get it but is there a curse placed on that magic stone or is it something extremely important to Luciel?”

It’s indeed true that it can’t be helped if they think of obtaining the magic stone.

I would have had the same thoughts if I did not see that scene in the past.

“No... It’s just that the Evil God will appear and everything around the magic stone will turn into undead. That’s all.”

???!!!!

Including Lionel and the others who knew about the circumstances, everyone could not hide their shock when I affirmed that.

“If that’s the case, wouldn’t it be alright if we just leave that sealed dragon alone? If we do so then it will end with nobody dying right?”

“I’ve thought of that too but unfortunately, if we do so, the world would be overrun by demons and monsters before the hero is born.”

I knew that Instructor Broad is a good person but precisely because he is a good person that I had to put a lid on his wish to escape from the door in front of him.

I’ve also considered not talking about this to Lionel and the others.

Astonishment once again gripped the air as I gave a weak smile.

“...Why are you stepping into such a dangerous place?”

“Only because I dispelled the seal on a dragon during a natural course of events. From then on, I moved within the range of what I am capable of doing.”

I patted my chest and smiled.

“...I see. You’ve become a real adventurer without me noticing.”

“If this is a real adventurer, I very much wish to be a fake one by all means.”

I felt that Instructor Broad made some kind of resolve but it only lasted for an instant before it transformed into a smile.

“I see... all right. Leave this place to me.”

“Please do so. Nevertheless, everyone, if anybody else approaches it, please cut them down to the extent of not killing them. Since I’ll just heal them after that.”

“””Yes!”””

“Well then, before I purify the place, I’ll promptly dispel the seal.”

I announced as I began walking towards the sealed door.

There weren’t any monsters around the door and it felt like it was waiting for my arrival.

“I don’t want to touch it but I have no choice. I pray that it’s a meek dragon if possible.”

I placed a prayer as I touched the door and it began to suck in my magical power.

“Gushing yellow? Meaning it should be a Thunder Dragon?”

As that thought ran through my head, a pattern emerged and the door began to open.

Even when I turned back to confirm, I could tell from their faces that all of them could not see it after all.

I dived into the door with a single hand held up and the door slowly closed, causing my exit to disappear completely.

Unlike the usual flight of stairs, down the aisle, I could see a dragon lying on its side while discharging blue, yellow and black lightning.

“If this is a trap, I’m confident that I would easily die multiple times.”

I gingerly but surely advanced forward, as I was about to reach the range of my magic circle, a voice rang out in my brain.

<Liberator who dispels the seal of the Evil God. Having dispelled the curse on Holy Dragon, Flame Dragon and Earth Dragon, have you come to dispel my seal this time?>

It seemed like the voice belonged to the Thunder Dragon.

Leaving that aside, it’s strange.

“You’ve retained consciousness despite being sealed?”

<Because I was the last of the dragon race to be sealed, it’s troublesome but I have some time.>

Indeed, as far as I could see, there was no muddy black miasma covering its body.

I felt slightly at ease as this meant that I would probably not be attacked.

Since I had this chance, I tried asking some questions.

“I see. Then would it be all right if I asked some questions?”

<Sure. The Liberator has the right to know everything.>

The Thunder Dragon looked like it was lazy but it was apparently willing to answer my questions and turned to face me.

“Then I’ll jump right into it, how many seals are there?”

<There are 8. Once you release me, there would be 4 remaining seals.>

“Meaning Light, Darkness, Water and Wind?”

<Yes. Furthermore, there are 6 Spirits. That is necessary information for becoming a Sage.>

“...You know about it?”

If the condition to become a Sage is to have the blessings from all Spirits and Dragons, I would definitely not want to do so though...

<We reincarnation dragons know everything.>

“If that’s true, what should I do so that the Evil God will not appear from the magic stone that is left after the dragons are released?”

Now, I am certainly going to confront it but I thought that if I could overcome it, it would be great that no other undead would be born anymore.

However, the Thunder Dragon instantly told me that it could not be done so easily.

<What’s left in the deepest part of the labyrinth is not a magic stone but the nucleus of the labyrinth. Touching it will call the administrator of the labyrinth.>

...What an unreasonable world.

“Are there no countermeasures? Like letting the other Gods know about the Evil God’s movements to stop it.”

<The labyrinth will disappear the moment the nucleus is brought to the outside.>

“What would happen to this place then? The mine has sunken in so the sealed door is outdoors.”

<? That’s strange. This Labyrinth of Traps in Grandol shouldn’t have collapsed.>

“I entered this door from the ruins of the mine that leads from the City of Meratoni in Saint Schull Allied Nations to Grandol.”

<... If that's the case, this presence... Quickly resolve my seal and head to the labyrinth in Grandol.>

The Thunder Dragon suddenly stood up and his electrical discharge was going off here and there.

As expected, I didn't think that I would be able to prevent electrical shocks so I somehow laid down flat.

"Uwa!! That's dangerous. What are you doing so suddenly?"

Luckily, I was not grazed by the discharge and I successfully evaded them.

<If this continues, the Priestess will be in danger. Hurry.>

It gave a heartbreaking cry.

It was as if a voice of worry towards one's beloved family.

"...Where would I appear if I exit here?"

<You should return to the original location. Quickly go to the Grandol labyrinth, dive into the Labyrinth of Traps and save her!!>

Electrical discharge once again surged as the Thunder Dragon's tension rose.

"Like I've said it's dangerous!! I'll go home without releasing you, you know."

<Do not stop the gear of fate. You have to save the Priestess.>

The gear of fate... it intends to move some kind of gear but I've decided to do what I am capable of.

As one might expect, I felt that a world where adventurers hold sway over the world would be easier to live in compared to a world where demons and monsters hold sway over the world.

"...I can't promise you but I will do my best."

<Show me that you are capable of overcoming the difficulties.>

I activated [Sanctuary Circle]. It should be going through considerable pain but looking at the unperturbed Thunder Dragon, I felt that I was lucky it ended without a fight as the black lightning discharge gradually disappeared.

“Kukuku. Liberator, I will entrust to you my blessing and my strength. Take out that cane on your waist.”

When I held out the Illusionary Cane, light from the Thunder Dragon was absorbed into the Illusionary Cane.

“...I’m sorry for dragging you into this. Please protect the Priestess’s future.”

“So it is possible for dragons to appeal for help.”

“Luciel, you are our knight. Now, protect the world’s equilibrium. I have fulfilled my pledge... Rafiluna...”

Just as I somewhat heard the Thunder Dragon mutter some kind of name, pain ran through my body.

“GuaaaAAA [High Heal].”

After the Thunder Dragon collapsed, lightning ran through the entirety of the room.

“...I truly thought that I would die.”

As I almost died from the omnidirectional lightning souvenir, as reparation, I collected all the items from the Thunder Dragon’s room.

There were items and gold there but I held my head at the thought that it was the management room of the labyrinth and jumped into the magic circle that appeared.

As I was wrapped in light, the usual mechanical voice announced my acquisition of a title.

Ping [Title: Thunder Dragon’s Blessing acquired.]

I opened my eyes when the light faded.

It seemed like I was transferred to a location slightly away from where the door was at.

As I was assessing the situation, Shisho and Lionel and the others came running over.

“Did you safely defeat the dragon?”

“Luciel-sama, welcome back.”

Without answered the 2 voices, I moved to keep my promise with the Thunder Dragon.

“We will head to Grandol’s labyrinth immediately. Shisho, Lionel, everyone, please lend me your strength.”

Everyone was daunted for a moment by my sudden remark but replies immediately came.

“Quickly bring out the carriage. It seems like you’re in a hurry?”

“We are Luciel-sama’s retainers so we will accompany you.”

“Truly, thank you.”

Garba-san and Grulga-san remained at the site while the remaining people accompanied me.

“We’ll try to return quickly if possible so please wait for us.”

“If it is possible, it will be great if you conquer that labyrinth.”

“There are bento inside here so eat them later.”

Thanking Garba-san and Grulga-san for their kindness, together with my reliable friends, we departed for the Labyrinth Nation Grandol.

Chapter 150

Labyrinth Nation Grandol

As eluded by this chapter, the labyrinth name will be changed to Labyrinth of Traps. The kanji's original meaning still means plot/trick/conspiracy/scheme but can be conjugated with action verbs to refer to falling into a trap etc.

We lightly cut through the vacant mine site and entered Grandol territory.

Normally, we would have to make a huge detour and go through the checking station for the entry procedure but this time, the Grandol operation was organized by the Adventurer's Guild headquarters so I decided to use the shortest route.

I made my decision after the backing of Instructor Broad.

"Because I, as a guildmaster, am around, there won't be any problems. Moreover, it's an emergency right? If it's for that then I'll just write a written explanation."

While feeling grateful for Shisho's words, I also presumed upon his kindness.

It was great that we would enter Grandol territory following this but a single problem surfaced.

"...It's a little late now but, does anyone know where the Labyrinth of Traps is located at?"

"I don't. I was an adventurer in the past but I was more of a complete requests type of adventurer than a labyrinth diving kind."

Receiving Shisho's reply, I looked at my surroundings and saw that all of them were not familiar with labyrinths so I suggested for us to go to the nearest village or town to ask.

"Let's ask about labyrinths around this area."

"It's true that there should be multiple labyrinths in large and small sizes in Grandol

but... there shouldn't be any nearby."

So we have no choice but to run in a straight line and hope to reach a highway huh?

"...Sorry for rushing everyone. I also don't really know why I am in such a hurry but let's first look for a highway."

Everyone quietly nodded with a smile but I couldn't help but think that those eyes were like gazes from parents watching the growth of their child.

Currently, Cathy and Kefin were the carriage drivers but we decided that if we see any buildings or people, Shisho will take over as the coachman and Lionel will act as the escort as a single horse rider.

After riding the carriage for about an hour from the ruins of the mine where we departed from, we finally found a highway.

However, the same time we gazed at where the highway would lead to, we confirmed the presence of a fort-like construction far off to the right side.

"...Hey hey. That was way too much of a shortcut."

It seemed like Shisho was familiar with the fort.

But the unpleasant expression he made concerned me.

"Does Shisho know what is that place?"

"Yeah. That is the country border. The fort that separates Grandol and the Principality of Blange... in other words, the country boundary line."

"Would something like that even be useful?"

"That was constructed by heroes who were summoned so it will not collapse easily and it was apparently built in anticipation for when monsters overflow from Grandol."

In anticipation of this time's incident? Or... summoned heroes as in people from Earth? No, it might be safer to consider that there are life forms from other dimensions.

However, it doesn't matter now.

If Shisho knows about that then...

“So it seems you know where we are now?”

“Yeah. If we proceed on this highway towards the left, we would arrive at the center of Grandol in a few hours judging by this carriage’s speed.”

“Then let’s go.”

Everyone agreed and we changed course to the left and resumed our travel.

At that time, for some reason it felt like the hair behind me was being pulled back and I was being stopped but I prioritized the request from the Thunder Dragon to find the Labyrinth of Traps.

We took a lunch break there but no adventurers and, of course, no monsters approached us.

We swapped Instructor Broad to be the coachman and set off.

After traveling for a while, we began passing by carriages and adventurers.

“Luciel, from here on there will be a lot of adventurers but there will also be many who hate Healers. It’s true that you did revise the treatment fee for Healers but keep in mind that only applies to within Saint Schull Allied Nations.”

Shisho turned around from the driver seat and informed me.

So people would not have heard of my name and I’ll once again face the baptism of being an ‘away’ party?

Well, Lionel and the others would properly guard me so it’ll most likely be all right.

While I had that thought, I was also able to discover the breadth of Shisho’s caliber who is capable of being nonchalantly attentive.

I carved into my heart to not bring shame to such a person and set my goal to someday overtake him.

“Thank you for the advice. But, well, it will be all right. Since I am also an Adventurer.”

“I see.”

After I replied with a smile, Shisho also smiled and faced forward as he spurred the

horse carriage on.

Then, at about 15 o'clock when I was beginning to feel hungry, we finally arrived at Grandol.

"This is Grandol. The carriage will be a hindrance so until we find out the location for the Labyrinth of Traps, please store it in the magic bag. After that, let's go to the guild headquarters first."

"Okay."

I acknowledged and after storing the horses and carriage, I chased after Instructor Broad.

The scale of Grandol's Adventurer's Guild wasn't any larger compared to the Adventurer's Guilds I have seen till this date but I realized that there was an insanely large facility behind the building.

"What's the building over there?"

"That's the guild headquarters. Well, only guildmasters or employees can enter or exit though."

"I see."

"Incidentally, that's also the place where we measure how much Object X has been consumed."

Instructor Broad announced with a grin but to be honest, I don't obtain anything from that so I was not interested.

"Instructor Broad, if so then give me a yearly prize for drinking Object X."

"If I could do that, we'll likely be in first place every year as long as you are alive."

"You don't have to give such a bitter smile. Ha~. Leaving that aside, let's go ask about the location of the Labyrinth of Traps."

"Ou."

We entered the Adventurer's Guild with Instructor Broad in the lead.

Upon entering the Adventurer's Guild after opening the door, there were a lot of adventurers but perhaps the fighting with the monsters intensified here as well, there were many wounded individuals.

"...Luciel, will you treat these people?"

"...I'll comply if it's Shisho's order. But, to be honest, I don't want to treat the injuries of people who are glaring at the robe I'm wearing."

"Hah. I see."

"Did I say something funny?"

"No, you just no longer fear adventurers you don't know more than I had imagined."

"Yeah. Since Instructor Broad and Lionel are around now."

I frankly spoke the truth with a smile.

"No more delicately fussy replies?"

"That's in the past. More importantly."

"Tch, I know."

It would be a hindrance if all of us went so Instructor Broad and Kefin went to the reception and I left the information gathering to them.

There were 2 people waiting at the table that was immediately beside the place where we entered but I chanced upon some unexpected information.

"Hey, have you heard the rumor about the Labyrinth of Traps?"

"Why are you being so flustered? What happened in that labyrinth full of traps?"

"The talk about those Nadia and Lydia sisters being brought in as criminal slaves."

"Seriously? I can't imagine those 2 committing any crime but above that, will those 2 obediently remain caught?"

"The elder sister is an elegant swordswoman and the younger sister is a spirit-user right?"

"Maybe they fell into a trap after they formed a party to conquer the labyrinth?"

“Ah~ah. It’s plausible if that’s what happened. But, it seems like it would cost a considerable sum to purchase those 2.”

“It would be an auction right if it’s those 2.”

“That’s a story that doesn’t concern us.”

It felt like I was pressed for a decision from the conversation between those adventurers.

To head to the Labyrinth of Traps like this, save the Dragon Priestess and discover the core of the labyrinth without touching it.

Or, head to the Labyrinth of Traps after purchasing the Spirit-user.

At the time of listening to the talk about the Spirit-user... no, from slightly before I even entered Meratoni, I have a feeling that Great Luck-sensei has been showing me the way.

Thinking up to that point, I spoke out.

“You guys heard the conversation between the other adventurers right? It’s possible that the Spirit-user might be of aid to us in the future. So I will purchase her. It’s possible that her elder sister might also be a similar individual too.”

“You’re completely just a soft-hearted person nya.”

“...From the conversation, it seems like it would be an auction so I’ll decide without hesitation if we will head for the labyrinth first or participate in the auction first before heading to the labyrinth after confirming the date and time of the auction.”

“Luciel-sama is always so kind.”

“...Sorry for abusing my power.”

Everyone put up bitter smiles when I lowered my head.

Just nice at that time, Instructor Broad and Kefin returned.

“The Labyrinth of Traps is to the north of here, a distance of about 1-hour ride by carriage.”

“If we set off immediately, we should arrive by evening. However, the troublesome

part is that the so-called Labyrinth of Traps is full of traps and it appears that it would take some time to conquer.”

“...I see. It would be better if we procure food ingredients. Shisho, apart from this, another place came up that I wish to stop by.”

“Where? The guild headquarters is, as to be expected, impossible though.”

“Haha. I certainly want to visit that place but actually, I want to drop by a slave auction.”

“...Luciel going to a slave auction huh... is there something there?”

“...I don’t know yet. If I am to believe the words of the dragon, I have to head for the labyrinth immediately though.”

“...This time, I’m tagging along for the sake of observing my disciple’s growth and training. So trust your own intuition without regard to anything else.”

“Yes.”

I replied Shisho and head towards the adventurers who were conversing just now.

Then, I asked in a straightforward manner.

“Could you tell me more about the slaves and slave auction you were talking about earlier? If you tell me, I’ll treat those injuries as payment.”

While I was smiling, standing behind me were Instructor Broad and Lionel who were releasing overwhelming intimidation so needless to say...

Thus, we amicably succeeded in asking the adventurers about the slave merchant and slave auction.

Chapter 151

Slave merchant and the rumoured adventurer sisters

We've heard about the location of the slave dealer and we headed towards the slave dealer but going in with all of our members would, as expected, be seen as intimidation towards the slave merchant so the ones to enter the shop would be me, Lionel and Estia.

"If that's the case, I'll standby outside. Since these guys are likely to get caught in bad situations if only slaves wait outside."

"There's no transfer of information here nya."

"I'll also investigate slightly more on the Labyrinth of Traps."

"Shisho, please look after the 2 of them."

I nodded to Cathy and Kefin's words and stepped into the slave dealership after entrusting the 2 of them to Instructor Broad.

"Welcome. Oya, it's been a long time since a Healer came to our shop."

I imagined a shady guy to be the shop owner but... I was taken aback by the smartly-dressed man carrying a youthful atmosphere who entered the hall.

"I'm surprised you can tell that I'm a Healer?"

"Of course. Healers have been our loyal customers up until a couple of years back."

I thought for an instant that the robe I was wearing was exposed but my intuition told me that wasn't the case.

Well, if there truly has been a Healer who came by the slave dealership, I'd like to ask for his/her name.

Was it strange to think that way? Just by thinking about it made me melancholic so I entered the main topic.

“...I see. Actually, I’ve heard on the streets that a famous pair of adventurer sisters have been turned into slaves so I’ve come here to search for them.”

“Hou. You’ve caught wind of it quickly... well, they will be exhibited during today’s auction so you can get more details at that time.”

“Sorry but please allow me to converse with them for a while. I will decide after that if I want to buy or not.”

I negotiated for a conversation with 1 gold coin as a tip.

Money is important but this time, I judged that it was a battle against time.

“Uh huh. Oh well, I guess it’s fine. But, please do not reveal the condition of the commodity.”

With my use of a gold coin, the man easily yielded to my request to have a short interview.

“Yeah. I understand. I swear that I will not reveal the condition of the adventurer sisters to anybody apart from my party.”

“...This way please.”

“Lionel, I leave it to you.”

“Yes!”

I planned to have Lionel check if they seem strong and competent as I followed after the back of the slave merchant with me in the lead.

I was slightly bothered by why the male slave merchant would allow me to immediately meet the sisters but I guess he decided that their value would not change even if I am allowed to see them.

However, even if I did not ask that man for the answer, I instantly knew the reason when we arrived at the sister’s prison.

While being guided by the slave merchant, there were also employees who led us through the prison but I was surprised by the slaves who acted in a way that gave us

the false sense of being a distinguished personage.

It can be said to feel as if we were in a high-class pet shop but instead of dogs and cat, it dealt in humans.

“Please don’t make such a mystified expression. It’s just a means to sell the commodities at a higher price.”

Just like that, until we arrived at the sisters’ prison, I felt a clear difference in class between this place and the slave dealership in Ienith.

It was clean in any of the prisons and from the decked out clothes to the grade of food that shows fine management, it gave off a sense of professionalism where they considered the value of the slaves as commodities and pursued the method to implement and put into practice how expensive they could be sold for.

It was my first time experiencing such a feeling since I came to this world.

If Dolan and the others are manufacturing professionals, this man here is probably a professional businessman.

Rather than the slaves, I ended up being more interested as to who this man really was.

From the high-class slaves, the grade steadily dropped until the final prison where the rumored sisters were.

The adventurer sisters appearing at the auction this time would most likely play the role of the star attraction from the value of their name.

However, looking at the sisters, I could not imagine them being sold as slaves and I was convinced as to why the man had me agree to the condition to not reveal their current state.

Painful traces of stab marks on their eyes, ears cut off, inflamed scalp with no hair remaining, torn off arms that have been petrified and feet undergoing necrosis perhaps due to circulating poison.

I was shocked to the extent that I could not raise a voice upon seeing the sisters and I would have normally immediately applied [Extra Heal] in situations like this but I

struggled to suppress the strong urge that was driving me.

Looking at the 2 of them, feelings of immense sadness and nostalgia(?) burst out, I felt my eyes turn hot for some reason and it was hard for me to look at them directly.

“It was until yesterday that these 2 were known as beautiful sisters. I am told they were betrayed by their companions and the place they fled to had a trap that they fell into with apparently a hydra in it. Although they somehow escaped, along the way, when they were exhausted, they were caught by the adventurers who betrayed them.”

“...Then aren't they illegal slaves?”

“The problem comes after that. After they left the labyrinth, they killed the adventurers. Furthermore, new adventurers who were not related at all were dragged into the fight.”

“...The new adventurers met with misfortune huh?”

The new adventurers were most probably asked to approach the sister who could no longer see.

The ones who met with misfortune were the new adventurers and the sisters so the fiend was the one who sold them to the slave dealer.

I decided to have Instructor Broad investigate this information after the auction had ended and impose punishment.

“Yeah. But they were in this condition after all. They most likely could not judge. The adventurers captured them and they came in while in that condition. They can't even be recognized as women anymore...”

If that's the case then I don't understand why they had to be so relentless as to drive them to this extent.

“I see. So can they speak?”

“That's impossible. They are alive but they are in a mysterious state... I won't return your gold just because you can't have a conversation with them.”

With cuts on their throats, I understood that they were not in a condition to talk normally.

“Yeah. I won’t ask you to return it. So what time is the auction today? And can I even participate in the auction?”

“...You plan to purchase these 2?”

The slave dealer’s poker face crumbled.

“As expected... if it’s an auction then there should be outstanding items and competent slaves right?”

“Ah, I see. I’ll write you a letter of introduction then.”

When he determined that I won’t buy them after all, his expression returned.

“Okay. Also, just in case, would you allow me to talk for just a moment?”

“Sure. Please call me when you are done.”

I was judged to be a whimsical guy... his eyes gave me that kind of feeling.

“That’s quite a great deal of trust in me.”

“Fufufu. What I trust in is not you but my eyes. Furthermore... no, nothing. Once you’re done, please come to the entrance.”

“.....”

The male slave dealer had substantial confidence in his eyes in judging people... or he pretends to have as Lionel gave me the sign telling me that there are eyes monitoring us.

The man returned to the entrance of the shop without noticing the sign.

I spoke to the sisters in the jail in an audible voice.

“My name is Luciel. The holder of blessings from dragons and spirits. Do you 2 possess blessings?”

“” ””

The 2 of them stiffened while remaining alert... or rather, they were probably enduring their fear as their vision and hearing were broken.

“Probably not only their vision but also their hearing have been completely broken.”

Lionel's examination was consistent with mine.

"...Estia, for the time being, please communicate with spirits and try to talk with them. If it's impossible then it can't be helped. So, Lionel, were there any usable talents in this slave dealership?"

While requesting for Estia to talk with the younger sister who is a Spirit-user if possible, Lionel directed his consciousness to me.

"...About 2 people."

"I see. Then maybe I'll talk to those 2 on the way back. Perhaps they may become our strength in the future."

"...Those 2 people are the sisters."

"...It's okay to not take my feelings into consideration you know?"

I looked at the 2 of them but I could not grasp the extent of their strength.

"Yes. The elder sister seems to have trained a considerable amount as a swordswoman and if the younger sister is, in fact, a Spirit-user, she should be able to use immense power."

"All right. So I'll buy these 2 huh? Well, if she's a Spirit-user, I only fear that she would be able to dispel the slave crest using spirits."

I could not tell as to how he determined those points.

Even so, I decided to trust Lionel.

"It'll just mean that it wasn't destined to be when that time comes."

"Okay. If that's the case, tonight we'll participate in the auction and tomorrow morning we will head for the Labyrinth of Traps."

"Yes!"

When Lionel and I talked to that point, I felt Estia stagger slightly.

"Estia, did she say something?"

“...The younger sister said that if you intend to buy her, she will not want it unless the elder sister is purchased together as well.”

That tone meant that the Darkness Spirit had replaced Estia.

“Thanks for the help. I will buy both of them so please help me convey to them to not die by all means before I purchase them at the auction. Lionel, let’s go ahead.”

“...Yes.”

Lionel most likely noticed that Estia was acting strangely.

Even so, he did not request for an explanation from me.

I’ll properly tell him after this.

Since he probably won’t imagine a Darkness Spirit living inside a Spirit Magic Swordsman.

By the time we opened the door we came in through, the Darkness Spirit was already standing by behind me.

And she looked unwell so I asked to be safe.

“Is it mental fatigue? Or did you expend too much magical power?”

“Sorry. I ended up feeling slightly mentally fatigued.”

“Sorry for asking you to push yourself.”

“It’s all right. I’m glad to have been useful.”

“Is that so?”

By the time we reached the entrance door, the person in charge opened it for us.

“Oya customers, are you done already?”

“Yeah. I could not talk with them.”

“Then did you treat the injuries of those sisters perfectly?”

“...That would be impossible.”

“Ha~ as expected huh? They can expect a considerable sum of gold if they heal those 2 perfectly but every Healer-sama refused.”

“Since [High Heal] is not capable of healing the collapsed eyes and missing body parts.”

Only if it's normally though... I've not been spending my gold unnecessarily so I decided to just buy them during the auction.

“Then, please hold onto this. Time-wise, it will start from 20 o'clock and the location will be behind the Merchant's Guild.”

The slave merchant handed me an invitation and then took out a map of this city and politely pointed out to me the location where the auction would be held.

He would probably receive a commission for my purchases at this auction but with this much business talent, won't he be fine just by doing business?

So I wondered.

“Okay. I'll buy if I see something I want.”

“Thank you.”

We were sent off by the man and left the slave dealership.

After we left the shop, Shisho and the others were waiting at the immediate vicinity.

“Well, that was quick. So how was it?”

“Yes. I decided to make an appearance at the auction. We'll leave the Labyrinth of Traps for tomorrow.”

“Is that so? If so then what do we do from now?”

“We'll go to an inn. You all are free to move about after that. Instructor Broad, you look like you have something to do as well so it's all right if you want to do that.”

“Okay. Then I'll head to the Adventurer's Guild headquarters. As expected, 3 chimeras were tough so I'll put in a complaint and ask for indemnities.”

I could tell that Shisho was pretty angry.

The talks at times like these would be protracted so I felt that the employees at the Adventurer's Headquarters would have a tough time too as we went to search for an inn.

“Then, let’s ask for a recommended inn in this city and stay the night there.”

“I’ve already asked about that so I’ll lead the way.”

“That helps a lot.”

Thanking Kefin who had already finished gathering information, we headed towards the inn and until the time at night when the auction would take place, I listened to Cathy and Kefin’s report on the Labyrinth of Traps and made a strategy for tomorrow.

Chapter 152

Auction

When the sun had completely set in the Adventurer city, it was as if there were dancing butterflies that flew and collided with spotlights as the city transformed into a city of shining desire.

In that City of the Night, Lionel and I were walking.

“Cathy and Kefin hesitated until the end.”

“That’s because they have seen Luciel-sama’s troubles from up close before.”

Lionel said with a laugh but my stomach was hurting slightly from how I was already recognized by them as a troublemaker.

“We have funds so apart from those sisters, if there’s even a slight need for any of the talents or items, please let me know.”

“Understood.”

Passing through the Merchant’s Guild, Lionel and I reached the venue of the auction and we were able to pass just with the invitation without going through a body check.

The rule was the same in both Ienith and in Grandol, if any problems occur, the shop that wrote the invitation would take full responsibility but in exchange, they will receive returns from the transactions.

The security guard told me that this time, the auction will encompass a wide variety of slaves, equipment, accessories, items and entitlements.

“It might even become a battle.”

“That might happen if it is done poorly but I believe there won’t be a problem.”

It looked like Lionel was hoping for the opposite contrary to my mutterings.

Looking at his figure, I decided to purchase the desired talents and required items even if it leads to competition in the auction.

Upon sitting at our assigned seats, we checked the surroundings and confirmed the locations of the entrances and exits.

From then on, the numbers gradually increased but when a masked individual that looked like a man appeared, the entrances and exits were blockaded.

Then, the masked man glanced across the auditorium and began his speech.

“Welcome, gentlemen and ladies, young and old, thank you for gathering and attending today’s auction. As of this moment, the auction shall begin. This time, the entered commodities are 30 in total so please participate in all of them. Without further ado, entry number 1, Sword of Raging Fire. This was excavated from the labyrinth in Labyrinth Nation Grandol, when magical power is put into it, the sword tip will flare up and if it is activated well, it’s an item where you can expect the effect of burning your enemies.”

“We don’t need that.”

“Yeah. But the price would likely rise.”

As estimated by Lionel, it was successfully bid for with 17 gold coins.

If an item like that cost that much, I didn’t want to think how much the other items would cost.

Then, an item that I must successfully bid for no matter what came out.

“Entry number 5, Spirit Robe. An item that possesses high magic resistance and automatic repair. The item came from an adventurer.

“...There’s no helping it, I guess I’ll buy it.”

“Are you sure? I don’t believe that is fake but I don’t see any value in purchasing it?”

“That’s true. But for example, what if Lionel’s favorite mantle or armor from your time with the Empire appears in the auction?”

“...I’ll purchase it.”

“I believe that is probably the younger sister’s equipment. If it’s wrong then I’ll just have her equip it.”

“You’re really kind when it comes to saving people.”

“Please laugh at me if she still runs away after all this.”

“Understood.”

Starting from the Spirit Robe, I consecutively bidded successfully for a Spirit Necklase, Pegasus Boots, Spirit Tree Staff, Dragon Armor, Dragon Gauntlets, Dragon Boots and Dragon Robe.

“I’m getting seriously glared at.”

“Well, since your total purchases are reaching close to 10 white gold coins. Luciel-sama would appear to be trolling this auction.”

“Either way we’ll be leaving this city tomorrow.”

“Well, originally I planned to train by having mock battles with Whirlwind anyway.”

“Yeah. Since it has reached this point, I’ll buy even if I don’t want them.”

However, since the tension was rising, the equipment auction ended and the land and building entitlement auction began.

People were wary of me but when they realized that I won’t be buying them, the amount of gold bidded rose all at once.

“I didn’t bid double the amount so I don’t think I’ve violated any rule?”

“But didn’t you raise the gold amount in no time?”

“That’s because that is psychological warfare.”

After the land entitlement that showed the most excitement ended, the slave auction finally began.

“From here on, it will be the slaves that everyone has been waiting for. Entry number 23, Dragonewt Alfred. He is a criminal slave who destroyed a building in a drunken haze and killed a guard but his strength is worth seeing.”

“...I don’t want that.”

“I understand.”

There weren’t any slaves with pitiable charges or children who should be sheltered

so I did not purchase any of them.

“There isn’t much.”

“Yeah. There weren’t any that looked like they would be good after training them.”

“For the convenience of transporting the commodities, entry numbers 29 and 30 will come out together. Registering as an adventurer while crossed dressed as a beautiful swordsman, the genius swordswoman who became a high-ranking adventurer in the blink of an eye within a couple of years as well as her younger sister, the Spirit Magician who chased after her elder sister.”

However, they came out in the same terrible situation I saw them in during the day.

The people who were waiting in anticipation for the 2 of them were angered and in the end, there were even people who threw items onto the stage.

“Everyone, please calm your anger. These 2 were betrayed by their companions in the labyrinth and just as they were about to be raped, they activated one of the labyrinth’s traps and luckily escaped that place. However, that trap moved them to a monster room and the monster that awaited them was a hydra. The men who chased after them were eaten and the 2 of them thought that they had finally escaped after returning from the labyrinth but half of their beautiful faces were inflamed by deadly poison and their feet were undergoing necrosis while the younger sister even had her eyes burnt. However, what awaited the sisters were bandits dressed as adventurers. The arrows released during the surprise attack pierced their throats and they only somehow survived using high-class potions but they lost their voices in exchange. Furthermore, in addition to their equipment and items, the bandits would have kidnapped these 2 if they had their original looks but looking at their ugly looks, they destroyed both their eyes and ears and robbed their high-class equipment and items. Even so, the sisters fought without giving up and ended up accidentally killing the newbie adventurers who came to help. For these 2 people who have become criminal slaves, if any of you have the money to treat them, you would have your hands on 2 pretty sisters. Now then, please start the auction.”

The moderator said it that way but a sigh flowed across the venue.

Everyone understood.

They would not be able to regain their crushed eyes and neither will they be able to

regain their voice due to their crushed throats. They would not be able to regain control over the 4 limbs they have lost either.

Even so, that masked man started the auction.

“It will start with 10 gold coins for the 2 of them together.”

It proceeded to 20 pieces and 30 pieces but there was totally no momentum like before.

“One white gold coin.”

Everyone fell completely silent when I called that.

The masked man made a polite bow in my direction and I realized that the masked man was the slave merchant.

“Lionel, did you recognize the masked man?”

“Yes. But it was just a while ago. For him to be that slave merchant... that man is a considerably sharp and able person.”

“I’d like a person about as sharp and able as that man as my companion the next time I manage a country. Well, one that doesn’t betray me takes precedence though.”

If it’s a sharp and able individual like him, he must have aimed for opportunities he made using his own strength.

His goal for being a slave merchant is probably to raise funds and gather talents.

That’s how it felt to me.

“Businessmen flow to where profits can be made, it might be possible if you can utilize their morality to hold them in one location while still continuing their profits but...”

“Ha~. If I could do that then I won’t have to struggle so much...”

“That’s true.”

While we changed words with smiles, the masked moderator gave the call to end the auction.

“That will be all for the auction today so please disperse. Please join us next time if you have the chance.”

The stage curtain lowered as the masked man bowed.

With the final purchase of those sisters, the gazes from the surroundings changed to one where they considered me to be a person who doesn't know how to use money so the only saving grace was that it didn't look like it a fight would break out huh?

While having that thought, I headed over to collect the equipment I purchased as well as the sisters.

I was guided by an attendant and would have to exchange the items by paying the successful bids I called during the auction.

“Healer-dono, because you have a large number of items, this way please.”

I didn't know for what reason but I was brought to a private room.

And the person attending to us was the masked man who returned to be a slave merchant.

“It's because we can safely deliver the items here. Firstly, please take out the total amount for these 8 bids.”

I placed 11 white gold coins down.

“This is the payment for the 10 items including the slave sisters. I don't need the change.”

“...Indeed. Well then, I will bring them here so please wait a moment.”

“No, I will go there.”

I touched the equipment to collect them and chose to follow the man.

“...I see. This way please then.”

I noticed the man's face twitch for an instant.

When I arrived, the girls were placed in a prison but the other slaves were also housed within so it was a very bad environment.

It's not like their bodies were touched or kicked or were they subjected to verbal abuse but it was a mentally stressful environment.

"...That's terrible."

"It's because we have various circumstances as well."

"It's fine. Then could you bring those 2 here?"

"Please wait a moment."

The male slave merchant called out to the men watching him and they entered inside and violently dragged the sisters until before our eyes.

"Even if they are slaves, what is the meaning of treating my possession like this!!"

At that point in time, Lionel grabbed my shoulder and I was in a state where I could not take action.

"Oya, so you are one of those who are kind to slaves huh?"

The man was provoking me.

It was shown in that man's eyes.

"...Hurry up and get it done with."

"...Well then, I will hand over the slave crest. May I have your blood?"

With an expression saying it was not fun how I endured the provocation, he started his work with indifference.

I was gripping my fist tightly so even without using a knife, my blood immediately spilled when I faced my palm down.

"With this, you have ownership of these slaves."

The same time I heard those words, I took out robes from my item bag and placed them onto the 2 sisters, crossed their arms over my neck and raised them while hugging their waists.

"We're returning Lionel."

"Yes!"

Even if there was an attack, Lionel's both hands were empty so we would probably be

able to shake it off.

While having that thought, we exited the building where the auction was held and everyone came to welcome us.

“What happened?”

“I came to pick you guys up since it was likely to be attacked after an auction. When I said that I would come myself, they all insisted on coming to pick you up too. And so, those 2 are?”

It seems like Instructor Broad was worried that we would be attacked.

If there were specialized squads aiming for that, I felt like there wouldn't be many who will gather for an auction but that might not have been true.

“Yes. I intended to continue like this to the inn as I am continuously applying [Heal] but now with you all here, it doesn't look like there would be a problem even if we're attacked.”

I instantly activated [Recover], [Dispel], and [Purification].

“Luciel-sama, did you immediately release these 2 from slavery?”

Kefin asked in shock but Lionel smiled while standing next to me.

“Yeah. But, I released them from slavery not because I trust the 2 of them or because I was swayed by my emotions towards their pitiable treatment. Lionel also intended for me to proceed this way right?”

“Yes. It felt like that man was hiding something and I had a disturbing feeling when you 2 did the slave contract. I believe this judgment is correct. Since it looked like he was looking at us with eyes that were investigating us.”

I felt that too when we visited the slave dealership.

It left an impression as though I was being appraised.

I won't be troubled even if he appraised me but it's also true that I was also slightly concerned about what that sharp and able man was thinking.

“Well, that’s what happened so let’s first return to the inn and completely treat these 2 people in one go.”

I announced that so Cathy and Estia were about to carry the sisters but they grabbed onto me firmly.

“It would be impossible to unravel if it’s like this nya.”

“Luciel-sama, please work hard.”

After those 2 said that, I ended up carrying the 2 sisters all the way while receiving warm gazes from my surroundings.

Chapter 153

Something more important than the sense of duty

I felt jumpy several times on the way back but we didn't get attacked in the end.

"So they didn't attack in the end huh?"

"Our opponent's ability was probably fairly high too."

"Well, their tailing was amateurish and they didn't have any assassination-type members so even if they did attack, we probably wouldn't have any problems."

Certainly, with Instructor Broad and Lionel here, it's unlikely for us to be defeated.

Thinking about it that way, it showed that the ones who were intending to attack us were at least able to gauge their opponent's ability.

"Well, we'll be departing tomorrow so it shouldn't be a problem."

While feeling the weight of the 2 people I was carrying on my left and right, we somehow returned to the inn safely.

We directly proceeded to Estia and Cathy's room and upon sitting them down on the bed, they relaxed for a split second so I immediately escaped.

"Well then, I'll apply healing magic on the 2 of them now so please subdue them if they act violently."

After confirming that everyone nodded, I activated [Extra Heal] on the 2 of them at the same time.

I considered asking Estia to use the power of the Darkness Spirit but thinking that the spirit and the host herself would be exhausted if they push themselves too much, I chose this method instead.

Wrapped in light, their lost ears and necrotising legs returned to normal and Instructor Broad who actually saw it for the first time begin to become weirdly excited.

“Won’t we be able to fight at full strength every day if this is possible? Luciel too, if we train Luciel to the extent of not killing him, he should be able to rise to a skill level close to ours within 5 years right, Lionel.”

“If he levels up in a labyrinth while training, even if he doesn’t have natural talent, Luciel-sama still has room for growth.”

“As expected, you think so too?”

“Yeah.”

That’s not a conversation you have while I’m just beside you! While tsukkomi-ing them in my heart, I finished treating the 2 people.

“My name is Luciel, I’m a Healer. I believe you 2 understand just by hearing my voice but I have completely healed your injuries and abnormal conditions. You can try to confirm it.”

Upon speaking to the sisters, they gradually opened their eyes and they begin to show joy and confusion at being able to see and hear.

Then, after the sisters confirmed that they were next to each other, they hugged each other.

However, no matter how much I want to continue watching over this touching reunion, we’re not exactly free either so I entered the main topic.

“You 2 can remain as you are there but please listen. Do you 2 possess blessings? I have acquired multiple blessings from dragons and spirits and they have asked me to search for individuals with blessings.”

The 2 of them heard me and stopped hugging, they looked at each other before looking at me.

“I am Nadia, the Swordswoman with the title of the Dragon God’s Priestess/Shrine Maiden(Miko). Thank you for helping us.”

“I am Lydia, the Spirit-user holding the title of Blessing of the Spirit King. I truly thank you for healing our injuries.”

The 2 of them introduced themselves like that and extended their gratitude.

However, I noticed something... remembered something when I saw the 2 of them perform that self-introduction.

I understand that they are the Dragon God Priestess and a holder of the Blessing from the Spirit King but at the same time, aren't they reincarnated individuals too?

I ended up having such suspicions.

There was a reason why I felt a sense of nostalgia when I saw the 2 of them at the slave dealership even though they had unrecognizable features.

I now know the reason why I was more irritated than expected when they were treated sloppily after I purchased them.

The 2 of them are somewhat similar to 2 people who still remain in my memories, my senpai who taught me a lot in my previous life and my always cheerful and energetic kouhai.

"...Are the 2 of you aware of circumstances that lead to the situation you 2 were in?"

I guised myself in calmness as I hit them with a question.

"I formed a 2 person adventurer party with Lydia. However, to clear the Labyrinth of Traps, skills to disarm traps and decent combat power is required. Hence, we formed a joint party with another group but various things happened and there was a Hydra where we escaped to and even though we somehow escaped, we were attacked by either adventurers or bandits after we exit the labyrinth and could not use our eyes and ears before we realized it."

"Then, I will tell you the truth I know. The people you were resisting sealed your eyes and ears and then guided you to kill totally unrelated new adventurers. You sisters were then brought to the slave merchant, I purchased you at the auction just now and completely healed you 2 with magic."

I was debating whether to tell them the circumstances regarding the murders they committed but I decided to not lie to them, including the fact that they have become slaves.

While I was treating their injuries, they behaved as if they recognized who I am but

because they lowered their heads to thank me, I could not continue to read their expressions.

They continued to convey words of gratitude for a while after that.

Then, when they reached a pause in saying their thanks, I asked Nadia about what they intend to do for the future.

“...What we plan to do from now on? We’ve become slaves so naturally, we will follow our owner Luciel-sama?”

“Well, normally that would be the case but currently, your slave contracts have been dispelled. Since there was a need to erase curse-type conditions as well to completely treat you 2 but... what do the 2 of you want to do from now on?”

The Dragons and Spirits hoped that I would take the 2 of them as my partners.

However, it’s unlikely that I would be able to immediately make a decision as to take the 2 of them as my partners.

“...Are you letting us decide?”

“Yeah. To become slaves, become my followers or return to being adventurers, I don’t mind if you make the decision yourselves. I want you 2 as my followers if possible but I will not force you to make that decision.”

After I told them that, Nadia glanced at her younger sister Lydia and Lydia nodded.

Maybe she was asking the Spirits about the situation as if employing them like a lie detector? Then, Nadia once again turned back towards me and gave her reply.

“Luciel-sama right? Please lend us your strength.”

She lowered her head along with her younger sister.

It probably only meant 1 thing.

“...You wish to release all the Reincarnation Dragons and acquire blessings from all the Spirits? I’ll answer you honestly then. In the past, currently and in the future, I will actively not involve myself with them. I will merely take action if I am dragged into the situation and have no other choice. That is my answer.”

Even I find that answer to be useless but compared to the 2 people in front of me, I

place more importance in Lionel and the others who have become my trusted followers.

That's why I don't intend to say things like 'I will act for the sake of these 2 people'.

Within that atmosphere, I could see that Shisho was desperately restraining himself from laughing and I was also reflexively about to laugh but I somehow endured.

Then, after some time, Nadia spoke.

"...Luciel-sama, just for a short time, is it possible for us to decide after we experience journeying along with you?"

Well, that might be the normal reaction to a situation like this.

Usually, Cathy and Kefin would complain about it but this time, they refrained from doing so.

"...Yeah. All right."

I moved to the table and prepared the food.

"You 2 can use this room. I'll also put the food here. I'll see you 2 tomorrow."

""Thank you.""

Seeing the 2 of them bow down at the same time, we left the room.

"Cathy, Estia, I'm sorry for giving them your room."

"It's all right nya. Leaving that aside, does Luciel-sama know those 2 people nya?"

"No... it's just that they resemble the atmosphere of people who had taken care of me and given me energy in the past so I was just surprised."

"Luciel-sama, your complexion was pale so please don't overdo it."

While thanking Cathy and Estia who were worried about me, I had a strategy meeting with the grinning Shisho and Lionel for tomorrow.

"We initially planned to save the Dragon God Priestess from the Labyrinth of Traps. But, now that we've already achieved that, we've lost our reason to go to the Labyrinth

of Traps. Instructor Broad, if it's like this, shall we return to Meratoni tomorrow?"

The others are my followers but Instructor Broad is different. Furthermore, he's a guildmaster so he probably can't take much free time on his own.

That's why, this time, I decided to act after consulting Shisho.

"...There would be paperwork for the incident this time for a very long time so I want to let off some steam but the headquarters would pester me if I use the underground training ground at the Adventurer's Guild so I can't use it. That's why there's a need for another location right?"

I could immediately tell that Shisho was not tied down by the Adventurer's Guild in Meratoni.

"...How many days do you plan to stay here?"

"Let's see... is it all right until this incident dies down?"

"Maybe about a month at the longest?"

"Yeah. With that duration, we're likely able to conquer all the labyrinths in Grandol including the Labyrinth of Traps with the members here right?"

"I see. That might be interesting."

...Lionel, why are you the one answering?

But, it didn't seem like it was possible to stop the 2 of them.

Well, it's not like there would be dragons sleeping in all of the labyrinths that exist so I'll just let the matter take its own course.

"...I'll purchase food supplies tomorrow so please confirm the locations of the labyrinths during that time."

"Okay. Well, with this, we'll be able to have mock battles once a day so I'll be able to ascertain your growth."

I was powerless to stop Shisho who said that and smiled.

“...Would it be wise to bring Nadia and Lydia along?”

“You can bring them along if you want to. But Luciel, you must also make sure and see for yourself. I understand the words by the Reincarnation Dragons and Spirits but if you get too caught up in that sense of duty, you would definitely lose something important to you.”

“...I know. I’d like to think about it for a bit.”

“That’s fine. Well, if you get too caught up in your sense of duty for the 2 of them, I’ll come save you... what are you looking and laughing at Sen’oni?”

“No, the fact that Luciel-sama and Whirlwind have a master-pupil relationship is just interesting.”

“Shut up. Tomorrow we’ll be starting early too so let’s quickly go rest.”

“Well then, Luciel-sama, see you tomorrow.”

“Yeah. Shisho, Lionel, good night.”

The 2 of them smiled while leaving the room.

“I wonder where do the 2 of them want me to aim towards? Nevertheless, to be caught up in my sense of duty... Shisho really sees through me.”

I went to sleep while reflecting on how I intended to achieve what was beyond my own ability after getting caught up in the moment.

If those sisters will be coming to the labyrinth too, would it be better if I pass them the equipment I bided on successfully?

While having such thoughts, Angel’s Pillow invited me to the land of dreams.

Chapter 154

Entrusted item

Waking up before sunrise, I headed to the room the sisters slept in.

“Good morning. Why are you guys here?”

I probed Cathy and Kefin who were trying to hide in the hallway.

“Good morning nya. Luciel-sama wakes up early as usual nya.”

“Luciel-sama, good morning. The thieves from yesterday were hanging around near the inn so we were keeping a lookout.”

I intended to let it go if the sisters ran away but I forgot about the assailants.

I felt that Kefin has really grown.

“I see. You guys followed up after me because I had insufficient forethought. Thank you. Tentatively, I came to pass the sisters their equipment apart from the robe I passed them yesterday.”

“Luciel-sama... to be honest, I do not understand why you would go to such lengths for the 2 of them. Certainly, I understand that they are special because they possess the blessings from Dragons and Spirits. But...”

Kefin said to me even though it looked like it was extremely hard for him to say it.

I was happy because I could tell that he was really concerned for me from his remark that properly considers how this appears to others.

While feeling grateful for attaining a loyal retainer like Kefin, I precisely explained to him.

“I guess not just Kefin but everyone is thinking about it as well? Why do I help them to this extent? It’s something like a justification for the blessings that I have received.”

“Justification?”

“Yeah. I am just an ordinary person who is able to use Healing Magic. I’m not a special existence. Even so, with the blessings given to me by the Dragons and Spirits, I’ve been able to overcome the difficulties I’ve faced until now... that’s how I feel. That’s why, by helping the 2 of them this time, by saving the Dragon God’s Priestess and the person who holds the blessing from the Spirit King, I show proof and sincerity for the Dragon and Spirit Blessings that I have received.”

That’s my true feelings.

Certainly, I was feeling elated from being told that she was my partner and I was having slight delusions knowing that she is my fated other but thinking about it calmly, I just an ordinary person.

It all stemmed from nothing more than releasing the Holy Dragon as I was desperately trying to survive.

That’s why, as proof of my efforts, I want to leave behind traces of my compensation.

“Nyahahah. Luciel-sama is seriously funny nya.”

“Pu pu~. Luciel-sama really frets the fine details. Even so, that is a wrong way of recognizing blessings.”

But the 2 of them laughed at my feelings.

I was shocked that my slightly serious talk was replied with laughter.

I didn’t expect the topic to normally be laughed at.

Not expecting to be made a fool of, even though they have pledged loyalty to me, I was, as might be expected, agitated and asked them with a strong tone.

“What do you mean by that?”

Perhaps the 2 of them could sense it, they erased their smiles and answered.

“There certainly are those who are born with blessings. However, the people who have been bestowed blessings after birth are only those who have been acknowledged by the existences who bestow the blessings to have accumulated virtue towards them or have helped them. Therefore, blessings are statuses given as repayment for the

favor.”

“Eh?”

I didn’t know about that fact at all.

“You didn’t know nya?”

Judging from Cathy’s attitude, Kefin’s information should be true.

I could infer that this fact should be quite widely known.

In retrospect, I received the blessings of the Reincarnation Dragons after I released them from their seals.

The Water Spirit’s blessing was after I saved the Hacchi tribe.

But what about the Earth Spirits? Now that I think about it, it’s about when I gave them high-grade honey as well as magical power.

Thinking about it that way, it seems like I have completely misunderstood about having been entrusted with the fate of the world.

(TL: In essence, Luciel thought that he was given blessings by the dragons and spirits so that he could aid/save the world but in fact, he was just given the blessings to thank him for saving/helping them without any strings attached.)

“You had a fresh morning expression just now but now it’s all cloudy nya. Luciel-sama, sorry for laughing at you just now nya.”

“...I sincerely apologize for laughing and for my impertinent remarks.”

The 2 of them were probably apologizing for getting carried away.

If blessings are proofs of having given aid, I tried to recall once again if I acquired anything other than the blessings.

Doing so, I honestly don’t understand the favor bestowed by the Spirits but apart from the blessings from the Dragons, I recall acquiring a lot other items.

Leaving aside the items left in the labyrinth, they occasionally hand out their own scales and they have also entrusted their power into my Illusionary Sword to aid me.

Thinking about it like that, it wasn't a bad feeling to feel that they might be pleased by how I helped them this time.

Since I was silent the whole time, the 2 of them did not raise their heads at all.

It would be tiring to be angry indefinitely and they have apologized too so I accepted their apology.

Even though I don't talk to them about everything, to feel offended just by that one part would be too narrow-minded.

"I was hurt by being laughed at but I was made aware of my own ignorance. I accept your apologies. Thank you for voicing out words that were hard to say."

The 2 of them raised their heads after I said that.

"Also, regarding this matter, I don't regret helping the sisters and just like how it has been until today, I will help with the bare minimum. What comes after will depend on the people themselves."

"As expected of Luciel-sama nya. Even though you're naive, you're still the same as ever towards others nya."

"I was rude even though I'm also one of the people who has been saved by that kindness. I will devote my full loyalty in the future."

"You don't need to think about it so rigidly. I think of my followers more of like family and I am also human so I will also make many mistakes. It will help me if you all give your advice and counsel during those times."

"Understood."

I said it all high and mighty but if I did not recall the 2 of them helping me in my

previous life... I might have just ignored them.

If I encountered the 2 of them because we possess blessings, instead of being attracted to each other, it might actually be more of being drawn to each other.

It would be weird to continue talking in the corridor forever so I knocked on the door leading to the room the 2 of them slept in.

Kon Kon Kon The knocking sounds rang out but there were no replies from within.

“As expected, they might still be sleeping?”

“Well, since it is still early.”

“Once the 2 of them wake up, we’ll go to Luciel-sama’s room together.”

“Really? Then, I’ll leave it to...” *Gacha*

The door opened before I assigned the task to them.

Then, just as I saw them, the 2 of them vigorously bowed down.

“”Sorry!””

The 3 of us were dumbfounded for being bowed at all of the sudden.

“I was told about your conversations by Spirit-san.”

“I had her convey it to me.”

Is she capable of listening to various types of Spirits by possessing the Spirit King’s Blessing?

I thought that it would be convenient if that’s the case but I could not really understand their reason for apologizing.

“I think you already know if you were told but you guys will be traveling with us for a while right? So, I thought of passing you 2 some equipment. May I come in?”

They were momentarily shocked about receiving equipment but I obtained permission to enter.

“Please enter.”

Cathy and I entered the room while Kefin remained behind outside.

“These are items I won at the same auction as you guys.”

The 2 of them were very surprised when I lined the items side-by-side on the bed.

“...Erm, weren't these expensive?”

Nadia asked but I decided to not tell them the price.

It would also serve to remonstrate myself for my actions.

“Since I heard from the slave dealer yesterday that you were a Swordswoman and a Spirit-user, I thought that you might have rare equipment so I bidded for them.”

“This is mine. I never expected to get it back.”

The younger sister Lydia is slightly more childish and perhaps more honest as she hugged the staff/cane/wand.

“...Er, was there a slightly warped sword?”

Like a Japanese sword? Or more of a curved sword type?

“There wasn't one. I thought they sold the whole set of equipment but it wasn't exhibited.”

“...I see.”

I passed the depressed Nadia a fairly decent sword I obtained when I was releasing the Thunder Dragon.

“You can use this for the time being.”

“Thank you.”

“There's something I need to tell you two. Because you 2 possess blessings and I have been entrusted to do so by the Dragons, I freely used my power to treat your injuries. However, this is not something ordinary. Typically, missing body parts cannot be regenerated and crushed eyes cannot be reformed. That's why I would like you 2 to live while covering your eyes with the hood on the robe you 2 are wearing currently

whenever you are in Grandol.”

That’s quite a serious request but either way, for the time being, I don’t intend to return to Grandol so it won’t be a problem even if it is discovered.

The 2 of them immediately agreed to it but we should move on the assumption that there would be people from the outside who will be investigating, including me, the 3 of us.

We lightly had our meal in the room the 2 of them were staying in and Kefin and Cathy tagged along with me to head out for shopping.

Citing it as the work of a guildmaster, Instructor Broad will be asking Nadia and Lydia about the events that happened in the Labyrinth of Traps, as well as what happened after they escaped in detail, including all the requests the 2 of them have accepted until now so that he can begin his research on the perpetrator and the mastermind. I decided to leave Lionel and Estia behind for their security.

I had Estia remain there so that the Spirits would not perform mischief on Shisho and Lionel.

Nobody raised objections so Cathy, Kefin and I came to do shopping together but as if it was natural for the 2 of them, they already had knowledge of information such as recommended shops.

Thanks to them, while securing sufficient amounts of various kinds of fresh food, we negotiated with shops that have a reputation for tasty food and we were able to purchase a large amount of their cooking along with their pots to keep them in.

“I didn’t expect to finish shopping so quickly. When did you 2 do your research?”

“Yesterday, when Luciel-sama entered the slave dealership, Whirlwind-sama gave an adventurer a silver coin and asked him to gather information. And he had us accompany him.”

“I didn’t expect the guildmaster to know of that method to gather information nya. I felt that he definitely did so to show us the method nya.”

Shisho might have been testing the 2 of them.

He's surely been planning how to dive into the labyrinth since that time.

While thinking about Shisho, I recalled about how I had completely forgotten to pass them gold for times like that.

"I see. Ah, I've completely forgotten to pay your wages. I'll pass it to you all later."

"Luciel-sama, you know what slaves don't get wages right?"

"It's fine to leave that unchanged nya."

"Rather than slaves, I plan to at least pass you all, as my retinue, a minimum amount of funds. Lionel should know about it too so I'm curious why he didn't say anything."

Well, whether Lionel approves of it or not is a different matter.

We returned to the inn while having that conversation and this time, we left the inn with all the members.

"So, shall we stop by the Adventurer's Guild?"

I asked Instructor Broad as I ushered the horses out from the Hermit's Stable.

"No, I've scattered the seeds (*TL: Perhaps meaning he has sent out orders to his subordinates*) so let's go to the labyrinth directly."

"Understood."

Maybe because she has recovered her physical condition, Fornoir came out and glanced at the whole group before play-biting my head so I applied purification magic and she once again returned to the stable.

"...Oh well. Well then, let's set off?"

Shisho and Lionel rode on horses, Cathy and Kefin took the carriage driver seats while Estia, Nadia, Lydia and I entered the carriage and we departed from Grandol.

Chapter 155

Raid

I didn't ask which labyrinth we would be heading to after we left the city of Grandol so I tried asking the 2 people sitting in the driver seat.

"I've heard that we would be going through multiple labyrinths but what kind of labyrinth would we be going to first?"

"Apparently, a labyrinth where only ant monsters appear and have only 10 floors. I also didn't know that there was such a shallow labyrinth."

"We've just fought ants so I wanted to refrain from going there but Lionel-sama was somewhat motivated so I couldn't stop him nya."

Unlike the slightly excited Kefin, maybe because she was imagining the ant monsters, Cathy looked like she didn't want to go to a labyrinth filled with ants like that.

I would obviously go with them if those 2 are going but just by imagining it slightly, I couldn't help but visualize the image of being thrown into a hole.

"...I see. Even though I have a very bad feeling about it... I am also incapable of stopping those 2 so we can only quietly follow them."

I looked at the 2 riding ahead and spat out a sigh.

It's encouraging to have 2 rivals cooperating with each other in my party but I wonder if I can reach the level the 2 of them wish of me.

It's extremely unsettling but I told myself to just do what I can and I decided to first begin with calming matters in the carriage.

"We've just come to Grandol yesterday but have you 2 been in this country for a long time?"

"It's been about 3 years for me. Slightly more than a year for Lydia."

"Is that so? Nevertheless, did you 2 form a party with just the 2 of you? You guys didn't

form parties with other people? During my time as a Healer in Meratoni, there were rarely any people who acted solo or in parties of 2?”

“Well, a lot of things happened and I acted solo for a long time. There were many troublesome matters but with ample preparation time and since my physical ability dramatically rose because I acquired the Dragon God’s Priestess title during my coming-of-age ceremony...”

I didn’t really understand her reason for acting solo for 3 years as an adventurer just because her physical ability drastically improved but I wonder if she has some kind of circumstance?

For the time being, I talked to the reticent Lydia.

“I see. Lydia is a Spirit-user and possesses the Blessing of the Spirit King right? Does the Blessing of the Spirit King allow you to borrow power from all Spirits?”

“Yes. Because I have not contracted with the Greater Spirits, I can only borrow power from young Spirits but I can borrow power without minding the attribute. Do you know about Rainstar-dono?”

“...Yeah. He is the founder of the church so naturally I’ve heard of him.”

I wonder what kind of reaction would she give me if I told her that I’ve also seen the actual him?

I was slightly tempted but I refrained from doing such thoughtless behavior.

“Rainstar-dono contracted with all the Greater Spirits and apparently met the Spirit King. I also aim to meet the Spirit King so I am working hard with elder sister.”

I could tell that she found that person amazing.

In contrast to the delighted younger sister, the elder sister was looking depressed.

I was curious as to why she was making a face as if she didn’t really want to become an adventurer but it happened just as I was about to ask.

I heard Shisho and Lionel’s voices from outside.

“It’s an enemy attack!! Some people dressed bandits.”

“Luciel-sama, please prepare for combat.”

What idiotic bandits to come even with those 2 around.

I begin preparing for battle while having that thought.

“Understood. Estia, please protect these 2. You 2 can remain in this carriage.”

I activated [Area Barrier] and moved to the driver seat and applied [Area Barrier] on Cathy and Kefin too.

“Anti-personnel combat... it’s my first time fighting with bandits but is there anything I need to prepare myself for?”

“Fight with the thought that you will die if you hesitate nya.”

“If you’re reluctant to kill them, please cut off their 4 limbs such that they can’t move.”

“Okay.”

Just as I activated [Area Barrier] with [Magic Circle Chant] on Shisho and Lionel in front of me, the enemies released their arrows.

The number looked like there were dozens of them falling like rain but Shisho and Lionel were laughing on the horses and seemed to be having some conversation.

“Those 2 look like they have so much leeway. Cathy and Kefin, please be wary of the left and right and behind.”

“”Yes!””

Cathy and Kefin also had smiles on their faces for some reason and begin to watch the left and right but I could tell that the number of arrows was gradually decreasing.

“Since they’ve released so many arrows, ran out of arrows and not a single person or even the horses were injured, they have no choice but to approach huh?”

“Then, I’ll temporarily entrust this location to you nyan.”

“We’ll go defeat the enemies to the left and right.”

The next instant, the 2 of them scattered to the left and right as if they had disappeared.

Looking at where the 2 of them were headed to, I could see the figures of a small squad

of about 5 people peeking at our condition.

“These might be the adventurers disguised as bandits and bandits and some other people mixed in that attacked the sisters. Even so, aren’t they too shabby?”

Just as I muttered that, the squad in front rushed at Shisho and Lionel.

“...No need to guess, they are trying to break through at one point and aim for this location!?”

At the driver seat, I drew my Holy Silver bow after such a long time.

If there’s anything we need to be even slightly cautious about, I would probably be able to help Shisho and Lionel.

I thought.

However, I could say that the combat would end shortly after.

Looking at the bandits charging over, Shisho disappeared from atop his horse and I could hear the stopping screams of the bandit advance troops.

Lionel saw that, got off his horse and caused walls of flames to appear to the left and right with a swing of his Flame Greatsword which killed the momentum of the charging horses.

“As expected of Lionel-sama. Nevertheless, Whirlwind is also a monster nya.”

“Indeed. I’ll be next after Luciel-sama but it looks like they would be able to train me. I’m extremely looking forward to it.”

The 2 who went towards the left and right squads returned at the same timing.

But Kefin. That is equal to a death flag you know.

I could not believe Kefin would say such a remark.

“Thank you for your hard work. Was there anything that could tell what bandits they were?”

“There wasn’t anything in particular nya. Rather than that, they were new adventurers who were hired with money nya.”

“It was the same at my side too. They talked before I threatened them. They were told that a single carriage would be attacked so they were requested to give their aid.”

I intuitively thought that the person who came up with that strategy was the same person who framed Nadia and Lydia.

“So what happened to those adventurers?”

“It seems like they decided to run away when the arrows rained down nya. I made all of them unconscious and took their adventurer cards nya.”

“I did the same at my side too.”

Garba-san was charged with the training for the 2 of them but I could tell that he had given them guidance from how they hide their dark side with their refreshing expressions.

“I see. Shall we return to Grandol for now after Shisho and Lionel come back? Please remain vigilant until the fighting ends.”

“”Yes!””

I left the driver seat to the 2 of them and peeked into the carriage to ask Nadia and Lydia.

“Do you 2 have any idea as to why you are being targeted?”

The 2 of them held each other hands and nodded.

“As I suspected. If that’s the case, then the question would be why didn’t they purchase you 2 during the auction. Then, it would mean that they were waiting for me to treat you 2. There shouldn’t be many people who know about me but if they possess appraisal skills then...”

I was caught in a whirlpool of thoughts but I tried asking if they know of anyone who would bring them back if they knew that the 2 of them have been healed.

“Do you have anybody in mind who would bring you 2 sisters back as slaves given that you are treated?”

“Father and brother, as well as the head of the current Earl family in Principality of

Blange who are descendants of the summoned hero, Blade von Kamiya.”

Summoned... I don't know where was he summoned from but Kamiya... if I think of it as Kamiya(神谷) then he was probably summoned from Japan?

And then, if it even involves their immediate family, it means that these 2 are nobles.

However, I've never heard of Kamiya-dono.

“...That summoned person was a hero right? But I've never heard of him?”

“I heard from father in the past that the achievements of the hero were treated as that of the Principality.”

Nadia answered indifferently but why did they run away in the first place?

It's common among stories, but even if one of them had a guy they liked, it doesn't seem like they hate guys?

“...Why did you run away? Though it seems plausible that nobles would have political marriages?”

“...Yes. I also resolved myself for it. However, about 3 months before my coming-of-age ceremony, I received a revelation from Dragon God-sama and I only prepared in case that revelation was true. Then, during my coming-of-age ceremony, when I acquired the title, I saw the world get engulfed by darkness. I decided to live my life to change that future.”

...Isn't my act of releasing the Holy Dragon the cause of that?

Taking that into consideration, did I wind up changing fate?

Despite my confusion, this time, Lydia spoke.

“I also heard the voice of the Spirits before my coming-of-age ceremony and once my coming-of-age ceremony ended, I thought that I was to be married at that point but everyone fell asleep all at once, I followed the voice of the Spirits to run away using a horse and I easily escaped. I reached where Nadia Ane-sama was and have been together with her from then on.”

I acquired the Blessing of the Water Spirit slightly more than a year ago but... there

should be other people who have acquired blessings too right?

Even if I think so, looking at the 2 of them, I end up feeling like our fates are intertwined so it felt mysterious.

However, imagining the situation, I felt sympathetic.

If it was me, I would not have been able to recover quickly.

“...In short, the Earl who was supposed to marry the 2 of you had his brides who are from the same family run away twice.”

Maybe they guessed my feelings as the 2 of them begin giving excuses.

“Kamiya-dono has a wife and 3 concubines so our role was to prevent father and brother from starting a rebellion... we’re essentially hostages. If it was to be like that, I wanted to live my life saving the world instead.”

So he already had a harem huh.

Well, it’s a system where a husband can have many wives but my feelings of sympathy had disappeared.

“Furthermore, a descendant of a hero is not a hero. In spite of them knowing that, father and brother... to mother who protected us...”

Lydia cried as she said that.

It’s unfair to use women’s weapon... If Shisho didn’t tell me to not drink Object X, my love-struck brain would probably have activated and caused me to be moved. Instead, feeling thankful that I have a Healer job where I can calmly think matters through, I combined the information from their stories and the uncomfortable feeling I felt in Grandol.

What if there was a person with Appraisal skill among our opponents and they set a trap to separate the 2 stronger individuals and seal them to lower our combat potential?

I considered up to that point and quickly gave instructions to Cathy and Kefin.

“As expected, there’s a possibility that guy is around, Cathy, Kefin, break through the center.”

The 2 of them urged the carriage forward without arguing against my instructions.

As we gradually closed the distance, I could still hear sounds of battle.

On the other side of the flame wall was Shisho who was struggling against a dozen or so adventurers, Lionel who had suffered from small scratches as well as the figure of the slave merchant man who had a smile on his face.

Chapter 156

True nature of the Slave Merchant

When we entered the front line of the battle, even though I was surprised that the 2 of them were struggling in battle, I applied [High Heal] from a distance and the smile pasted on the slave merchant's face since before changed to an expressionless face.

"You've noticed it already? Even though it looked like you would easily fall into traps, it seems that you're slightly capable of thinking."

"You, the slave merchant, was the person who set up this strategy huh?"

The slave merchant once again returned to his smiling face and begin talking.

"Quite astute. I'd like to ask just for reference but why did you think that this was just a diversion and why were you not surprised to see me here?"

The slaves who were fighting until a while ago stopped their movements as if to listen to me.

"That's because you were drunk on yourself and bragged about the method you used to commit your crime that went well once."

"Hou. Did I say something that tipped you off?"

"Yeah. The point where they were betrayed by companions when they were challenging the Labyrinth of Traps, about the hydra that attacked them, about the people who caught the sisters outside, about the new adventurers who were murdered, you talked too much in detail. As if you were a concerned party or the one who made the strategy. Furthermore, at that time, you were smiling."

They were truly small discomforts but they were there.

"...I see. I didn't notice. However, what if the people who sold the sisters boasted about it?"

His tone was calm but his smile disappeared and he was trying to provoke me.

“If that happened, I would think of you who is using the same method now to be considerably stupid. Since it would mean that you are unable to come up with your own strategy.”

I’m rehashing but if the ones who were in front weren’t Shisho and Lionel and they came charging here together, the carriage might have been attacked and I don’t know how the adventurers laying in ambush would be implicated...

“If you live to say it. Hurry up and get rid of them.”

The angered slave merchant announced as he pounced at Shisho and Lionel but Kefin and Cathy jumped in to assist them.

While I applied [High Heal] on Shisho and Lionel, I continued to provoke the slave merchant by talking about his mistakes.

“Moreover, you committed a failure as a slave merchant. How did you intend to analyze 2 people who were in such severe conditions? If you could analyze them, it can only mean that you possess an Appraisal skill. Once I thought of that, the contradicting points connected.”

There shouldn’t be any skill other than Appraisal that can analyze those 2 who were in such severe conditions.

If there are other skills, it should be a skill that I don’t know even though I had glanced through the list of skills multiple times (when I was reincarnated).

Then, by knowing if the slave merchant has an Appraisal skill or not, I would be able to get him to show his true colors.

“.....”

“If I assume that you possess the Appraisal skill, I would be able to be convinced by 2 actions that you took. Firstly, after confirming my Holy attribute magic skill level when I visited the slave trading post, you asked if I could heal them. Secondly, you did not say anything regarding why I purchased the 2 of them in the auction.”

“...And what does that prove?”

While the fighting continued, the man glared at me as if he was irritated.

“You were unsure if I could heal the sisters and was frustrated that I outwitted you so you asked your subordinate to mistreat the sisters when I came to receive them to anger me and perform some trick during the slave contract binding right? Although you wouldn’t have guessed that I would dispel it immediately.”

“...It just means that not everything will go as plan.”

“Plan?”

“Since you hold so many skills and you are of the same age as me, you’re a reincarnated person right? If you teach me how you acquired so many skills in just 6 years, I don’t mind pulling back this time?”

Even though I thought that he possesses an Appraisal skill, he didn’t look like he was about 20 years of age so I was shocked as I didn’t suspect him to be a reincarnated person.

“I don’t know about what reincarnated person but I’ll restrain you here and make you reveal all your crimes.”

“...As a reward for derailing my plans, quietly stand there and look as I make your own companions my pawns.”

The slaves abandoned their own lives as they all clung onto Shisho and Lionel.

“Don’t mess with me! Like I will let a person who relies on others to fight to hurt my important companions!!”

Breaking through my doubts after finding out that the opponent is a reincarnated person, I decided to cast [Dispel] using [Magic Circle Chant] on the slaves.

My magic circle was drawn over the bodies of the slaves.

“Tch, aim for that person in white robes.”

While pretending to be calm, the slave merchant seemed impatient as he ordered everyone to attack me when I activated my magic.

As expected, he doesn’t want to me dispel their slave crests.

I released 4 of the people with [Dispel] one at a time.

I believed that Instructor Broad and Lionel would completely stop the slaves approaching me so I focused on dispelling.

“Use your heads a bit when fighting. You trash!!”

The slave merchant instructed them to perform long distance attacks but I was protected from all those attacks by Cathy and Kefin.

Repeatedly casting [Dispel], the pressure exuded by the enemies weakened at once.

Then, when I had expended about half of my magical power, after I finished releasing all of the slaves, the combat came to a stop.

“You bastard, do you know how much time and money I spent to gather these amount of slaves!!”

Even though the slave merchant revealed his anger, I felt a sense of discomfort from the complete stillness.

For such a smart guy, would he snap just because his slaves were released?

I once again confirmed the situation and immediately gave out instructions.

“Even though I have released them from slavery, it doesn’t mean that they will stop... listening to orders as slaves.”

My words gradually became softer.

Because while I was in the middle of shouting, Shisho and Lionel had already begun sorting the released slaves and cutting them down.

They probably noticed the cause for the sense of discomfort faster than I could.

That there were some among them that would attack us even after they have been released from slavery.

“Truly reliable. Cathy, Kefin, please protect the carriage.”

I decided that the defense here was already sufficient and requested them to protect the carriage.

Of course, the ones there can fight too but I don't want them to appear in front of this slave merchant.

“”Yes!””

Cathy and Kefin received my order and fell back.

I once again cast [Area Barrier] on everyone before staring at the slave merchant and he returned my stare with an expressionless face.

“Ah~ah, so dull~ the games ended. Even though I planned to use you all as high-level sacrifices after they sharply cut you all down when given an opening...”

The slave merchant gave a dubious remark as the released former slaves were about to attack but the slave merchant raised his hand up towards the sky and a reddish-black magic circle appeared in the sky that released a magic with reddish-black light that blew apart the former slaves.

What exactly is this person?

Even though he's a reincarnated person, does he intend to be a field boss?

While tsukkomi-ing in my heart, I refined my magical power within my body and spoke to the slave merchant.

“What do you intend to summon with that magic circle?”

“Hou. I'm surprised you know that this is a summoning magic circle. Although it would have helped if you misunderstood it as an attacking magic. Perhaps it's still recorded in the church records? That's right, this is a summoning magic circle for the sake of summoning powerful demons or monsters. Despite the sacrifices being slaves, it's capable of summoning a slightly strong monster.”

Even though he mentioned live sacrifice himself, I could already see him as a person governed by insanity.

I'm interested in the slave merchant's story so I attempted to think calmly.

"...Earlier, you mentioned reincarnation. If you are an existence that has experienced a rebirth, why do you deviate from the path of a human? With that head and leading ability, you should be able to get whatever you wish for!"

The face of madness changed to an expressionless face and glared at me.

"...I have indeed died once and was reborn by the God's power. But what awaited me was... this rotten barbaric world where it's the survival of the fittest. A person like you who was born with such blessed abilities would probably not understand."

The pressure exuded by the magic circle begin to rise.

It might be the thought of every reincarnated person.

That speaking of fantasy worlds, it gives the impression that anything can be done with magic.

But the reality is that it is a circumstance where you're next to death's door every day so it's probably not strange to become like the slave merchant.

"But that doesn't mean that you lived all by your own right? There should have been people who supported you."

"There was. That's why I decided to take revenge against this world that murdered the people who supported me. I will destroy this world and rebuild it!!"

The man was elated, seeming like he was about to summon something evil.

And it looked like the man had no intention of stopping the summon.

"...That's unfortunate."

"Kukuku. There's nobody left to help you. You cheat bastard loved by the Gods, become my experience points!! Come out, wha, what?!"

Bachi Bari bari The reddish-black magic circle begin to crack and a pale white magic circle covered over the black magic circle.

Using almost all of my remaining magical power, I overwrite the reddish-black magic circle with [Sanctuary Circle].

“Sorry, but I won’t let you summon it. For the sake of my dream, I will not let you spill any more meaningless blood!!”

The activated [Sanctuary Circle] formed a light pillar that swallowed the reddish-black magic circle and the next instant, everything was swept away with a blast.

“Healer Luciel, I will crush your dreams the next time we meet so prepare yourself.”

I heard the voice of the slave merchant next to my ears the instant the explosion happened.

When the wind stopped, the figure of the slave merchant was nowhere to be seen.

Thus, while having a stomach ache from making a new enemy, I firmly swore to endure the training so that I won’t die.

Chapter 157

Fate of the assailants

Since then, we could not find the slave merchant no matter how hard we searched.

Although there were many with serious injuries among the former slaves who received the attack from that slave merchant, miraculously, there were no casualties.

I had no choice but to drink MP potions and heal the former slaves until the point where they would not pass away.

“Nevertheless, I did not expect the ones who were slashed by Shisho and Lionel to still be alive.”

At that time, I saw them heroically slice them so I thought that they had been killed for sure but I was amazed when I found out that every one of them was still alive.

“Luciel, look at them closely. These guys are not all slaves right? The attackers were actually a coalition of slaves, bandits, adventurers and some country’s private soldiers. We tried to deceive the enemy to extract information.”

“Information huh... Shisho. Even so, don’t you think you went a bit too far?”

Shisho laughed.

Just as I was about to ask if he didn’t understand what I meant, Lionel also grinned and answered for Shisho.

“Luciel-sama, even if it’s Whirlwind, it’s impossible to completely defend against that number of combined attacks. Though he would not suffer any injuries if he stood at that front during his prime...”

“He probably totally hasn’t noticed but there’s no need to lie to Luciel. Both this guy and I intentionally made it look like we were injured.”

“???”

Question marks lined up within my head.

“Ha~. Just by showing cuts on a single layer of thin skin to make an advantageous situation for the enemy, he will usually get drunk on himself and willfully become talkative right?”

“That’s right. By showing like we were injured, we finally got the mastermind to appear just when Luciel-sama arrived.”

Shisho spat out a huge sigh as he taught me the strategy of pretending to struggle like in a difficult fight.

Furthermore, Lionel explained to me the situation at that time but there were points where I was unconvinced.

However, was everything Lionel said just now a lie? I considered if that was Lionel’s own way of accurately discerning Shisho’s condition.

When I thought about that, I felt that perhaps Shisho’s combat intuition might have dulled.

...Shisho spends most of his time in the Adventurer’s Guild’s training ground.

Was that not meant to cultivate combat intuition? It is often the case in my previous life, as the years go by, what could be done in the past can no longer be done.

I don’t know the Shisho of the past but compared to his adventuring time where he fought with burning life force, it’s possible enough that the sense that is not reflected in skill and status may be dulled for the Shisho who continuously stays inside the Adventurer’s Guild.

The highest numeric value for status exist but it does not mean that a person will consistently remain in the state of having the highest stats.

Is Shisho not still in the condition of test running if he can regain his actual combat intuition?

I reached that conclusion.

“Shisho, has your combat sense and combat intuition returned? Didn’t Shisho intentionally allow a thin layer of skin of yours to be cut for the sake of cultivating them?”

Like in combat training? I posed that question.

“...Just a bit. These guys’ individual abilities are so-so but they were able to cooperate to an abnormal extent so I’ve returned to having combat power equal to current A-rank adventurers. Well, even though their quality was poor maybe because it’s a coalition, regardless of their scattered attack timing, they launched the worst kind of attacks where they attacked even their own companions so it was fun.”

Shisho said as if to shake off the anxious expression on my face as he gave his report on his analysis of the opponents and the situation.

I realized it was rather foolish to worry about this battle maniac.

“I don’t know how strong an A-rank adventurer is but if it was me, I would have died multiple times.”

“If you’d die from something of that extent, you’ll really die during training.”

Ah, I dug my own grave... those eyes were eyes that told me he’ll half-kill me if I disappoint him.

My knees trembled at the sight of those eyes that I have not seen in a long while.

I’ll change the topic.

Since I might die if the topic continues...

“Ev, even so, you did a good job not killing them despite having to fend off that number of attacks.”

“In the beginning, I thought that it couldn’t be helped if I killed them but the ones apart from the slaves who had no choice but to fight were weak. If it’s just to hold out against those people, Luciel should also be able to do it.”

“Really?”

It seems like Shisho acknowledged my growth.

“Since I trained you so much, you won’t lose consciousness just from pain right? Also, if you can use healing magic as well, it shouldn’t be a problem if you only need to stall for time.”

Well, he didn't say that I would be able to fight them though.

I wonder if I have grown as a warrior?

"Luciel-sama, that's Whirlwind's way of hiding his embarrassment. This time, your excellent judgment of the situation and healing magic saved everyone including me. If you were slightly later, we would have no choice but to kill them."

"Well, that's true. Since the slaves were tied down by a curse. There should definitely be ones among them who were forcibly turned into slaves. That's why it was a great help when you dispelled them from slavery."

...Even though I've been thinking about this and that since just now, I was still convinced that these 2 are in another dimension.

They probably thought of disabling the enemies without killing them even under those circumstances.

If they unleashed their full strength, it would have ended without my intervention.

Well, thinking about it calmly, that's only natural.

But then, I was curious as to why these 2 did not capture the slave merchant.

"...But, I'm curious about that slave merchant."

"Luciel, I'll tell you beforehand, the one we saw was a fake."

"Ha?"

"I threw a stone at him when I saw a chance but it passed through him."

There's probably a reason why they didn't tell me that.

If that's the case, I'll ask about another question I had.

"...We were targeted because I purchased the sisters but even so, didn't he take action too soon?"

"You're right. For him to invest this amount of combat force that can be said to be abnormal just to capture the sisters. His aim might possibly be Blange instead."

"What do you mean?"

I didn't understand how it led to Blange.

"He had eyes fraught with madness... those are eyes from a person who was robbed of people or something important to him by an unreasonable power. Because Grandol is a country where the Adventurer's Guild operates in, even though it looks uncivilized but an adventurer's rank is everything. If something evil is done, a high ranker from the guild headquarters will mobilize to fix the problem so even if it's a grudge towards a single person, he won't think of destroying the world... If it reached that point, his opponent should either be an organization, nobility or a country. It's because those sisters were born in Blange. Although we won't know the actual truth without catching him."

This person really puts the pieces together quickly.

If it's an organization... won't it be fine if we ask the attackers who these 2 thought they seem to be a country's private soldiers?

"Even so, why Blange?"

"Intuition. However, without knowing who the sisters know, why they were so persistently attacked and if I am to elaborate further, looking at the private soldiers there, it might be violence that can escalate to an international issue."

Even though the combat just ended, he did well to deduce that from such scarce information.

This reasoning ability might be this person's greatness.

However, one thing that I was curious about arose.

"...If that deduction is true, won't that slave merchant hold quite a serious grudge against me?"

"Didn't he already declare that?"

He certainly did specifically name me and declared that he will destroy my dream.

To want to crush the wonderful dream of having a peaceful life...

"...Well, what's done is done. Leaving that aside, regarding these people's treatment, what should we do with them?"

“If they were regular bandits, more than half will be killed as an example. Since it would take time to interrogate them. Well, this time it can’t be helped so we should probably transport them to the Adventurer’s Guild headquarters in Grandol and request for the professionals to handle it.”

While half will fall into despair, I was too scared to ask Shisho about which professionals he was referring to.

It took us 3 hours to return from the journey we took an hour to traverse previously. We plan to call a slave merchant at the Adventurer’s Guild headquarters, drop off all the slaves, and leave it up to the Adventurer’s Guild headquarters to interrogate them.

“Shisho, is it really all right to entrust this to the Adventurer’s Guild?”

“Yeah. I don’t really care at all if the guild headquarters think that Meratoni’s guildmaster is incompetent. The information we are looking for would probably come up if we just do an investigation. As a result, I would be able to earn a favor as well.”

This person is a genius in thinking ahead.

“Is it regarding the matter you were investigating yesterday?”

“Yeah. Since the ones who will get into trouble if this incident comes to light are the management in charge of requests and adventurers as you can immediately tell that it is a result of negligence.”

“As expected of Shisho. Okay. What should I do?”

“Let me see... it’s fine if you don’t do anything. Maybe just make sure these people don’t escape?”

“Okay. I don’t mind doing that... no, thank you. I’ll also give instructions to Lionel and the others to cut them down if they escape.”

“I see. Then, wait here for a bit.”

Shisho said as he entered the Adventurer’s Guild.

That person’s greatness was his ability to reliably determine the important points.

Nevertheless, it’s great that Instructor Broad looks like he is somewhat having fun.

“It seems like I am always being spoilt by Shisho... Lionel, what do you think would have appeared if that slave merchant’s summon succeeded?”

He’s the same level as Shisho so he probably understood something too.

“If it’s such a huge magic circle, it might be a large monster or if we’re unlucky, a demon might appear.”

“...There were also demons at the village we stopped at before reaching Meratoni but what is your opinion on that?”

I was surprised nonetheless when I heard him say demon.

A person who can employ such a being would be monstrous.

I thought that the demons in that village were only affiliated with the Empire but maybe I was wrong?

“This time would have been different. This time, it would have been a summon subjected to subordination to the slave merchant who made the magic circle. It would clearly be a demon of different status compared to the ones we fought with.”

“Now that I think about it, the Empire is close to the demon’s territory but have there been wars?”

“Yeah. There were frequent conflicts up until about 20 years ago.”

“...That’s the period when there were changes to the Emperor, Prime minister and influential nobles right?”

“I’m surprised you know about that. After the death of the previous Emperor, the representatives were replaced altogether. Well, it was unrelated to me who worked as a general at that time though.”

“...Just since when did you become a general?”

“Since I was 20. So nostalgic.”

He was even younger than I am currently... thinking about it that way, I could tell just how excellent Lionel was.

When I was able to verify that Lionel is not an ordinary person, Shisho came over with

a couple robust men and told the attackers to enter the Adventurer's Guild and took them along with them.

"Luciel, the attackers will be turned to slaves. Their sale returns will all be credited to your account."

"Is that all right? It would be fine if Shisho accepted it instead. Since I had you accompany me in Grandol..."

"Then, for the sake of appeasing everyone when we return to Meratoni, help me treat everyone to alcohol."

"All right. Oh right, if the rookie adventurers who Cathy and Kefin captured didn't realize they were working for evil and were deceived, please release them. Since they should be able to start over."

During the journey back to Grandol, there were some among the rookie adventurers who cried towards the prospect of becoming slaves.

Seeing that, I decided to release them if they really didn't know anything about the incident this time.

Even if their luck was bad, holding the feeling of being saved, they should be able to work hard to crawl up from the bottom.

I believed in that.

"...So naive. However, without such leniency, it might give birth to men like that slave merchant. All right. I'll put in a word for them. Well then, the time now is not here nor there so what should we do?"

"We can camp out as well so let's proceed on. Instead of getting caught in a trap again, I think we should move forward to polish ourselves even if only slightly."

"Hou, well said. As expected of my disciple. Then let's get ready to depart."

"Yes."

Thus, we entrusted the attackers to the Adventurer's Guild and we departed for the ant labyrinth for the sake of polishing ourselves.

Chapter 158

The ultimate goal of training

In the vicinity of the labyrinths in Grandol, there apparently will be the existence of, though small, towns. Advancing on the carriage a short distance after sunset, we saw lights from a distance away so we no longer needed to camp out.

Having a town beside the labyrinth puts it in danger if the monsters overflow from the labyrinth, like what happened this time, but the Adventurer's Guild headquarters operates in this country so it would likely be resolved quickly.

The reason for the towns is to secure a stable supply of magic stones for export to Nelldal as the sole country to be able to do so.

"Shisho, why have we come to the labyrinth even though we can already see the town?"

"Because the current you don't have the air of tension... of well-honed senses. It's for the sake of cultivating that."

"...Was there a time when I had that air?"

"Yeah. When I fought with you in the Holy Capital's Adventurer's Guild. I thought that it would have been great if you continued to grow like that but unfortunately now, not to mention a sense of danger, there isn't even enough sense of tension."

...The time when I fought in the Holy Capital was, if I remember correctly... during the time I conquered the Labyrinth of Tribulations.

The time when I dove in the labyrinth for a long time and somehow escaped while having the feeling that I was going to be killed.

Just recalling it makes me feel that I did really well to survive through that...

"That's because I was desperately trying to survive at that time..."

"That's what the current you is lacking. With Sen'oni around, you would be able to weather through most battles so you probably have a sense of security. However, I

feel that the sense of security has dulled Luciel's rate of growth. To make up for your lack of talent, you have spent a longer time than Sen'oni and me on the verge of death and it should be possible to regain that sense. From this point on will be your real training."

Well, these 2 have likely been on the verge of death before but they probably did not experience losing arms and legs for over half a year like me so Shisho's words might be true.

But what worried me the most was the words 'it will be the real deal from now'.

"Well, I think that it wouldn't have been strange if I fell into madness at that time..."

Because my Mental Resistance increased from drinking Object X and because I had Angel's Pillow, even though I thought about a lot of things, my biggest focus was to not give up.

But I have a feeling I would immediately regain that sense if I fight with the 2 of them?

"Luciel, acquiring your well-honed sense is not our only goal, this time, the training is for the sake of converting your cowardice into your own weapon. That's why there is a need to corner you..."

"...What exactly do you plan to do to me?"

Shisho's freezing glance caused the pores all over my body to open and cold sweat to pour out.

I had prepared myself for Instructor Broad's training but hearing his words to push me into a corner caused my body to cower with fright from the realization that it won't just involve some half-baked content.

Thinking back, I wasn't allowed to use heal at all for muscle pains and bruises, he used real swords to slash at me even though it was training and he released bloodlust to determine if I really could no longer stand or not, there weren't any decent memories.

"If I say it in simple terms, I plan for you to be able to live your life with just your mind and magical power senses."

"Ha?"

"Normally we won't be able to use such a dangerous method but if it's Luciel who is able to use healing magic, you'll definitely be able to master it. The essence of martial

arts, to read the signs and perceive the best timing to counter an opponent's attack."

Even if you tell me such manga-like moves...

However, whenever Shisho says it with that kind of hopeful feeling, I know that if it's viewed from a probability standpoint, the chance doesn't even reach 50%.

"...Has anybody ever succeeded?"

"Including Rainstar-dono, there has been many who have. Well, it's said that Rainstar-dono listened to the voice of the Spirits so it might be slightly different."

Even if you tell me with that nice smile... looking at it from the flip side, it's the same as saying Rainstar-dono couldn't do it or that there wasn't a need for him to do so?

They want to make me learn that but is there really a need for me to learn it?

For an ordinary person like me... I felt bloodthirst from behind my back and turning back, I saw Lionel and the others who looked like they were having fun.

"Splendid. From now on, let's gradually increase the things you are capable of."

"Everything except for bloodthirst was missed out so it might take some time nya."

"We'll also give our full support so let us grow stronger together."

"Since it's Luciel-sama, he'll definitely be able to achieve anything."

"Lydia and I will also assist Luciel-sama."

"Even though I only have weak ability to sense the magical power of Spirits of all attributes, please allow me to assist."

My retainers were brimming with motivation for some reason.

Moreover, I'm concerned about why they are so delighted to hear about my training but they will definitely regret making me go through this special training.

Since without having to focus on me, Shisho will spend his spare time on everyone else.

Furthermore, it would be a hellish world where naivety would totally not be tolerated.

“Work hard to live up to your followers’ expectations.”

“Gyaaaaaa.”

The moment my training content was decided, all of the sudden, Shisho crushed my eyeballs.

Just as I tried to quickly use [Extra Heal], I sensed bloodthirst from Shisho and distanced myself.

“Good reaction. It’s fine if you want to use [Heal] to remove the pain but if you heal yourself until you can see again, this time, I’ll gouge out your eyeballs.”

I knew that those frightening words were not just a threat.

Shisho is a man of his words.

However, I decided to prove that, unlike the yes man I was before, I can also say no now.”

“Shisho, when will you be having your mock battle with Lionel? I’ve been looking forward to both your performances. Don’t you 2 have something you have to do that comes before my training?”

“Of course. However, both Sen’oni and I have to dust off our rust before we can return to our prime. If Luciel can grasp presence and magical power by sensing the breath of the earth and the torrent of the atmosphere, by mimicking all that I do, you should be able to sublimate it into something that you can call your own. Once you achieve that, no matter if your opponent is a dragon or a demon, there’s no reason for you to not be able to win. If it is for the sake of letting my disciple reach that realm, I will work towards my prime from now on.”

“Whirlwind. Luciel is not just your disciple. Well, I approve of that spirit. But, just mimicking is not sufficient at all. If you want him to be able to sense movement, there’s also a need to raise his physical ability like his reflexes and techniques to handle them to be able to react to those movements.”

“...Things like that can probably be done easily once his level increases. Furthermore, once he is able to grasp presence and magical power, by mimicking us, he should be able to feel the difference compared to himself.”

The final destination of these 2 people’s mimicking training... is way too impossible.

“Luciel, shift your feelings into gear. If you succeed in it all, a peaceful life awaits you.”

With that said, I could hear Shisho’s footsteps go away.

While thinking about how unreasonable that man is, I felt a sense of nostalgia towards this training that is mean for my sake even if it’s unreasonable.

Under the condition of having lost my sight, the thought of how harsh it would be to pass through the ant labyrinth made me feel like tearing up but I decided to work hard if only for the sake of living up to their expectations.

“It looked like Shisho has not eaten yet but maybe we’ll have lunch first.”

“Of course it’s a given that I’ll be eating too.”

As if having heard me, I could hear the footsteps of Shisho turning back.

Since a list of food stored within will appear in my head by touching my item bag, there was no problem with regards to everyone’s meal.

However, unable to eat without guidance even if I’m handed a spoon and fork in my hand, I received the humiliation of being spoon-fed... by Shisho.

“Luciel, the current you is like a baby. If it’s vexing, become able to sense everything.”

Even though I knew that was a pep talk, I can’t just remain like this and I can’t leisurely take my time without knowing when I would be able to succeed, so I focused my mind on my heart’s support that can be said to be my tranquilizer.

It was my [Skill Proficiency Appraisal].

I made the decision to begin working on searching for the more efficient learning method to increase my proficiency by checking what action raises my proficiency while without my vision.

This feeling that I had not felt for a long time gradually turned my unease to a sense of anticipation and I poured in all my effort in order to surprise Shisho.

Chapter 159

Once again, Spartan training

In the darkness where light cannot be felt, I walked while being guided by Nadia and Lydia on my left and right.

They weren't holding my hands but were only verbally guiding me but even that helped a lot.

I walked while confirming the path ahead using my Illusionary Cane/Staff but I've already almost stumbled and fallen several times so I was about to get cold feet.

Thinking about it made me feel slightly depressed.

I knew that I was entering the ant labyrinth but the eerie circumstance of not entering battle at all caused me to feel anxious as I stepped forth.

All the while praying that I will somehow move intuitively if anything dangerous happens because I have the danger perception skill...

However, something I did not imagine happened.

"Well then Luciel, try to survive with your vision like that."

After I seemingly heard Shisho's voice say that, I was pushed on my back and my danger perception skill suddenly began to react.

I was convinced that I was brought to some monster room by Shisho.

"What's the meaning of this, Shisho?"

"Try defeating all your enemies while in that condition. Your opponent is a horde of ants so there's no need to hold back. This is a rudimentary step taken because of what you lack. Work hard~."

The next instant after I heard Shisho's amused voice that was the polar opposite to

my anxious voice, I heard the sound of heavy doors closing and there was no reply even when I called everyone's names.

"...Seriously?"

To be honest, faced with the level of poor treatment incomparable to the past, I could not believe Shisho's words for a moment.

For a person who can't utilize presence perception and magical power perception well to be subjected to such poor treatment, Shisho's training is seriously unconventional.

Just hearing the *Kisha Kisha* cries and the *Saku Saku* sounds like the sound of legs creeping on the surface of the ground made it feel like my heart rate spiked all at once but in order to secure my safety with what I am capable of at the moment, I invoked [Area Barrier] and attempted to watch for the timing when I receive attacks.

I transformed my Illusionary Cane to its sword form and swung it in the direction of where I sensed a tingling sensation but not only did that attack not hit, it backfired on me as I felt a light impact on my abdomen.

I somehow flung my fist parallel to the location I received the attack and an unpleasant gooey sensation was transmitted to me.

"...I see. The opponents are weak but numerous. So I will be able to sense the opponent's presence and magical power like this?"

Fixing my goal as I naturally did not want to die, I stored my Illusionary Sword in my item bag and took out the Holy Dragon Spear to extend the distance between me and my opponents.

While focusing on the tingling danger perception, I began concentrating in order to sense presence and magical power.

Reading the situation by relying on sound, I sharpened my senses and attacked.

If I hit, I repeatedly corrected my error in sensing and allowed the feeling to permeate into my body.

Once I was comfortable with that, I then released my magical power externally and searched for the external sensation but that did not work at all.

“I forgot that labyrinths emitting magical power.”

I felt troubled for forgetting that important point but conversely, if I am capable of searching for magical power apart from my magical power and the labyrinth’s magical power, won’t I similarly be able to grasp other presences? With that thought, I was suddenly feeling motivated.

“Shall I go at it in a positive mindset after such a long time? Well, the ants have retreated... ouch?”

The instant a presence entered my sense when I sharpened my senses with all my nerves, some liquid suddenly hit my hand and it was slightly itchy so I applied [Heal] just in case.

“Maybe they are able to spit something like acid? If I don’t concentrate more, Shisho will laugh at me... that’s the only thing that irritates me so I’d hate it if that happens.”

I spread my legs shoulder width apart, lowered my hips, readied my spear and calmed my spirit with stable breathing.

The condition where I can only attack after receiving an attack was extremely vexing so my spirit seemed like it would break quickly.

Even so, because my proficiency rose ever so slightly judging by my proficiency appraisal, I was confident that what I was doing was not wrong.

It felt to me that the people connected to me in this world are sensitive to presence and magical power.

And they vaguely felt the fact that I (for being a reincarnated being) am a person who does not possess that sensitivity.

They probably accumulated experience on it since young.

Since the growing up phase is the golden age for acquiring techniques.

Even so, for the sake of my dream, I can’t die here.

“Even though it’s true that people who have stacked training since young would be strong, I should be able to do so if I put in effort that exceeds that. Dear ants, you will be the food for my growth and my supporting foundation.”

I relit my motivation by thinking positive but what awaited me was not attacks but Shisho’s attack using words.

“Then I’ll raise the difficulty slightly for the next round. Don’t mutter to yourself on your own in a place like this. It’s making the people here feel embarrassed.”

“Eh? Shisho? Since when?”

“From the start. Since I am aware that I am making you do something unreasonable. However... I think you’re putting in too much motivation for just 10 of the weakest ant monsters but... oh well. We’ll be moving to the next hunting ground.”

Suddenly attacked by intense shame, I wanted to hide in my shell like a shellfish but there’s no way Shisho will let me do so, so I began moving forward.

I felt the atmosphere of not only Shisho but also everyone else resisting the welling urge to laugh but I understood that they were here to cheer me on so I smiled and gave my all as I cried in my heart.

Without sparing any time for sleep, I was brought to the next hunting ground one after another and I was told by Nadia that 2 people monitored me until I defeated all the opponent while the others either took breaks or had mock battles.

“I didn’t imagine that I would be using [High Heal] like this countless times so isn’t Shisho being too excessive?”

“Everyone can sense with their skin the strength of Luciel-sama’s Shisho a.k.a Whirlwind-sama as well as Lionel-sama.”

I heard that Nadia requested Shisho and Lionel to teach her but she seemed like she was having quite some fun as her voice was lively.

“...Those 2 aren’t having their mock battle?”

“Yes. Since they don’t seem like they would settle for a draw once they fight, for now, all of us have mock battles with either one of them.”

As expected of rivals, they won’t settle for a draw.

Even so, Cathy, Kefin, and Estia should be quite strong too but if those 2 can still obtain a complete victory, have they always been that strong?

It’s possible that an ordinary person can’t grasp the greatness of a person over level 400 so I spat a sigh and was laughed at by Nadia.

While feeling slightly nostalgic, I requested of Nadia for just one matter going by their personality.

“Even though those 2 are strong, please tell them that I want them to come over if they get injured.”

“Yes, sir.”

Although I felt that I was slightly being laughed at, since the time they spent assisting me was long, I had the chance to talk with Estia, Nadia and Lydia so it felt like the distance between us shortened slightly.

My resting time was to be when we move to another hunting ground and the time I spend casting healing magic, as well as when we had meals and I was told that I can sleep anytime.

As I got to know the difficulty of maintaining concentration as the ants gradually became stronger and their numbers increased, I poured all my nerves into sensing presence and magical power.

Repeating that action, after the end of our 7th meal, I acquired the [Magical Power Perception] skill.

However, it was from that point that I felt that life was not that easy.

I moved from a level where I could roughly know where the presences were but then descended into a level where I conversely did not know where the presences were.

“...Does this mean it is equal to not being able to distinguish between the labyrinth’s magical power and the monster’s magical power?”

I was able to tell at the shallower portion of the labyrinth where the labyrinth's magical power was weaker the magical power of the monsters but that phenomenon happened when I descended to a floor where the magical powers were almost the same.

Just as I thought that I would be able to break through the ant labyrinth when I can somehow overcome this situation, Shisho called out for me to stop.

"This won't really function as training so we'll move to the next location? Luciel, take out the horses using your Hermit's Key and the carriage from your item bag. Also, take out the food too. You can sleep a bit after that's done if you want to."

Following Shisho's instructions, I took out the carriage and food and for some reason Angel's Pillow as well before my danger perception activated with a tingle the next instant and I felt a sharp pain in my abdomen.

"Gaba!? What?"

Following that, I felt another tingle and after receiving a shock to my neck, my consciousness faded away.

My consciousness returned with the sensation of a rattling shaking motion but because of a severe headache and sore neck, I healing myself with [Middle Heal].

"Where am I?"

"Luciel, you've awoken. I felt bad but you totally did not sleep during the labyrinth dive so I knocked you out and used that pillow to let you sleep."

"...Thanks to that, I slept well but the sensation after waking up was the worst."

While having mixed feelings about Shisho's overenthusiastic method to make me sleep, they informed me before I once again asked where we were.

"We'll be reaching the Hungry Wolf Labyrinth soon and we'll be having the training there this time."

I wanted to ask if the Hungry Wolf Labyrinth was where wolf monsters appear but knowing that I have no right to refuse, I just nodded in silence.

When I opened the Hermit's stable to herd the horses in, even though I could not see with my eyes, I could clearly identify just the presence of Fornoir.

Then, she approached me and once again play bit my head before returning to the stable.

"Fornoir... probably emits too much presence."

I laughed at my own strangeness but because I suddenly laughed, I felt some slightly weird gazes.

We had our meals immediately after arriving at our destination, the Hungry Wolf Labyrinth, and my training began after I took a break for a moment.

Even though I was properly equipped and I had erected a [Area Barrier] to absorb impacts, I was unexpectedly sent flying and my balance crumbled.

Furthermore, they cooperated with each other so it was nasty.

Without being able to rely on sight, I distinguished their movements from their soft footsteps and breathing and although I sensed the presence of the wolves that charged at me and somehow cut them down, if I did not strike them optimally, the stench of their blood would attract others and I felt the number of wolves steadily increase.

Even so, without giving up, I desperately defended the space between myself and my opponents no matter what happened to look for the right opportunity.

Once I strengthened that resolution, by the second meal time since we came to the Hungry Wolf Labyrinth, I acquired the skill [Presence Perception].

"Might I be a genius?"

When I muttered that, a grand sigh came from behind.

While thinking that I once again showed Shisho my embarrassing side, in my elation, I announced the results of my training to Shisho.

"Shisho, it seems like I have acquired the Magical Power and Presence skills so I have come to understand the benefits of perception and, little by little, the sense of finding

the appropriate opportunity.”

“I see. It’s going quite smoothly. Moreover, you have a strong will... that’s exactly why you are my disciple.”

“...Shisho, what’s wrong?”

I suddenly had a very bad feeling.

“If you sense a strong bloodthirst, think of it as me or Sen’oni and don’t attack. If we grip your elbow then it’s to lead you to move. If we touch your right shoulder then it’s the cue for lunch break. Touching your left shoulder is a cue to apply your healing magic on us, hitting both your shoulders is the cue to take out the carriage, if somebody hugs you, use Extra Heal on yourself. Have you remembered all of it?”

“Eh? If it’s just that then I should be able to remember but...?! Gyaaaaaa!”

I felt a sharp pain in both my ears with a *Paan!* and after that, there was complete silence, in that total darkness, I felt like I was in a deep sea where nothing can be heard except the rising beat of my heart.

I used [Heal] without hesitation but I did not regenerate my eardrums.

Because I would be able to see Shisho turn into a demon with my eyes if I regenerate them.

While thinking that the demon inside Shisho was having a slight conflict within him, it has become a training to rely on only magical power and presence after losing my sight and subsequently my hearing, I felt the beating of my heart throb even more than usual.

Thus, the severity of my training further increased.

Chapter 160

Unexpected incident

There were many times when I thought of throwing away everything during my about 40 years of life if I include my previous life.

Even so, by diligently accumulating experience without giving up, the endpoint will certainly come some day.

Then, it will be followed by the start of something else.

Against the wolf monsters that are the starting monsters when learning to fight monsters, I was bitten countless times but thanks to my equipment and [Area Barrier], their fangs did not reach my flesh so I was totally unharmed.

It was one thing to be yelled at by Shisho but being wrapped in an air of silence also made me notice some things.

I knew that wolves would appear in the Labyrinth of the Fang Wolf but even though in the beginning they mostly moved in a linear motion, they gradually began to have more attacking variations like kicking off the walls or attacking while cooperating with one another.

Because I was on the receiving end of varied attacks, I was forced into struggling battles and I gradually felt like I was under immense stress.

However, whenever that happened, somebody from the female team will firmly hold my hand without fail and I would regain my calm every time.

Occasionally, maybe due to the sense of security, I end up falling asleep but Shisho did not reproach me for that so I was able to maintain my spirits even in such harsh conditions.

After the 22nd meal since the start of my training, my Magical Power, Presence and Danger Perception skills all leveled up together and I felt like I was able to distinguish whatever was within 1 meter of me, albeit just faintly, so I began to feel the results of

this harsh special training.

Then, I even acquired [Intimidation Resistance] which was a godsend but that was really just a bonus.

Without concentrating, I gradually became able to notice the faint presences and magical powers that were nearly drowned out by the labyrinth approach me and by sensing those presences that entered my combat space and cutting them down, I was able to raise my skill level.

Am I growing stronger little by little?

It would be great if that is true.

When I reached that level of perception, my arm was pulled by Shisho going by the sensation and I received the cue to take out the carriage.

It probably meant that I have graduated from this labyrinth.

When I used the Hermit's Key, as usual, to take out the horses, I absentmindedly stared at the conspicuously large presence of Fornoir but I noticed it take shape.

Then, when she play bit me, I felt my gloominess and the stress accumulated in my mind disappear.

I once again fell asleep accompanied by intense pain.

When I woke up to the vibration sensed by my body, I healed myself with [Middle Heal] just like the previous time.

Thinking that it would definitely be a tour of the labyrinths, I continued meditating until we reached the next labyrinth.

While thinking of the day when I would be able to distinguish everyone's presence and magical power by color, I had my meal before I began my training.

When I was led into the labyrinth, I prayed that I do not lose my sense of smell, taste, and touch.

Then, although my prayers were answered, from the smell emitted when I cut the

monster that approached me, I recognized that I had slain a goblin.

I was slightly confused.

I wouldn't really be bothered if the goblins attacked with clubs or rusted swords but in actual fact, they attacked in a versatile manner with accurately aimed arrows and released magic so they were actually tremendously dangerous monsters.

Well, since I have magic and presence perception skills, I might be able to somehow sense it but because I am not able to recognize their weapons the way I am now, my impression was that it was way too dangerous.

I heightened my concentration and searched for any presence and magical power that was out of place while I braced for their attacks.

My nervousness was rising noticeably from the sweat on my hands.

To be safe, I readied my shield that didn't really seem reliable to me but I concentrated in order to escape from an instantaneous death.

However, I noticed one thing.

In comparison to the sensation of how the ants and wolves looked at me as food, I faintly sensed the goblins direct bloodthirst or rather hatred at me.

I didn't know why that was the case but noticing that was certainly helpful to me.

By sensing the faint magical power and presences attacking me, I fought with my feet planted firmly in the ground against the increasing hatred directed at me but even while I suffered attacks, I noticed that there was no need to be afraid of them any more than necessary.

When I was brought deeper into the labyrinth, the magic concentration thickened and it became harder to distinguish monsters using Magical Power Perception and the presences were mixed up due to the increase in the number of monsters so it became harder to grasp everything.

Even so, thanks to my Danger Perception, I was able to somehow avoid fatal injuries.

That tingling sensation became my lifeline.

During meal time, I activated [Area High Heal] for everyone while making sure to not include myself in it.

It's hard to explain why I did so but I peeped at Shisho and Lionel and it felt to me that everyone's presence had weakened.

Even though I applied my magic, I was not able to tell everyone's expression nor could I hear everybody's voices so it was purely for my own self-satisfaction...

My proficiency rose by 1 point the instant I sense the opponent once and I could see it rise over 3 points if I can clearly distinguish the opponent by the end of the battle.

For that reason, I could tell that it was a skill that was inherently easy to level up.

I could guess that the reason why the skill did not reveal itself until now was because I did not know in what way I could use it.

It's probably a skill that is extremely difficult to manifest.

Without my sight and hearing, Presence Perception and Magical Power Perception integrated with and heightened my Danger Perception so it would likely transform into my weapon one day.

Giving it thought, it is extremely likely that I might achieve the Mind's Eye that often appears in manga and novels.

I vaguely thought about such a thing.

It was going smoothly but it's impossible for everything to go according to plan.

That holds true for both Shisho and me.

Since in the first place, I am not a special human.

That was immediately after the 36th meal when the labyrinth capture was going smoothly, my Presence Perception and Magical Power Perception reached LvIII and my combat space had stretched to 2 meters.

While feeling puzzled at the presence and magical power of the individual that was completely different compared to goblins, I activated [Area Barrier] on all my allies

and entered my battle stance after activating it on myself too.

At that time, the thought of using Extra Heal did not surface in my mind at all as I merely thought of removing the lump that was in front of my eyes so I channeled magical power into my Illusionary Sword and circulated magical power throughout my whole body as well.

At that time, I heightened my concentration to the limits so that I won't die, read the bloodthirst emitted by the monster by combining its presence, magical power, and hatred and decided to defeat it while giving up on my thoughts at the start to attack first.

Because I thought that it would be truly reckless to advance without grasping the current terrain.

As if it understood that, it felt like the monster scoffed at me as the bloodthirst disappeared.

Then, after that scoff, the bloodthirst suddenly strengthened and sensing the danger, just as I readied my shield with my body bent, I felt a tingling sensation that was stronger than any I've felt before.

The next instant, 2 presences started running towards it.

It was probably Shisho and Lionel.

Because my perception level rose, I was able to notice the 2 of them.

They probably reduced the numbers all along and disposed of any dangerous monsters.

I felt at ease leaving the task to the 2 of them but because this time they did not do it without me noticing like before, I decided to join in.

Regarding the terrain, I reached the conclusion that since it was a labyrinth, where there was magical power meant there was a surface so I began running too.

Perhaps my act of running over was outside its expectations, the bloodthirst swelled in my direction as if directly aimed at me and the instant the tingling sensation intensified, I kicked the surface and leaped into mid-air to evade.

When I felt the tingling danger sign get interrupted for a moment, I stored my Illusionary Sword in mid-air and took out the Holy Dragon Spear before throwing it.

I don't know if it hit or not but the bloodthirst definitely dispersed.

Shisho and Lionel crossed to its left and right.

Even though I could only see it as a mental image, I felt my heart beat faster as I once again took out my Illusionary Sword when I landed, aimed at the mass of magical power and presence and rushed over with my body lowered.

The moment I sensed the tingling sensation, I poured all my magical power to slash at the mass in front of me with my Illusionary Sword.

The same time I completed my swing, it felt like the black mass burst open.

However, the next instant, an intense pain ran through my body and it felt like my consciousness was about to drift away but knowing that it would be bad if it continued, I somehow chanted High Heal but not only did the pain not subside, it conversely became worse.

While thinking that such a thing has not happened before, I thought that maybe I was being punished.

If it can't be healed, it might be a curse.

However, just as my consciousness was slowly fading away.

Somebody hugged me.

When I noticed that, I activated [Extra Heal], [Dispel], and [Recover] at the same time with No Chant.

When I was wrapped in the light, I thought I saw an angel smile at me with a troubled expression but the angel disappeared when the light gradually subsided.

In exchange, I heard and saw everybody's worried expressions and voices.

Shisho was making a face as if he was about to cry and he was hugging me being the one who was the most worried.

Feeling relieved that I had survived, I did not resist the attack of drowsiness and I released my consciousness.

Chapter 161

Prophecy

I woke up to the gentle caressing of my head.

“Fwua~, hn? Hermit’s Key?”

I noticed that I was on a bed when I woke up and was clenching onto the Hermit’s Key for some reason.

“Since when? Leaving that aside, it seems like both my eyes and ears are fine. I don’t feel anything abnormal with my body too!!”

Getting off the bed, I once again stretched myself and I checked the condition of my armor after recalling the battle I was in but it was not damaged at all.

“So was that stinging pain really from a curse after all? Or was it a different injury that [High Heal] couldn’t keep up with?”

Shisho and the others entered the room just as I was making my conjecture.

“Luciel, we were worried you know? Even though you couldn’t see, you still rushed to slash that demon, I really thought that my heart was going to stop.”

“Eh? Demon?”

I recalled the hair-raising sensation once I was told that I fought a demon instead of something like a goblin king.

So I probably would have died if I slipped up? So they are that strong if I do not set up [Sanctuary Circle]?

“Yeah. Nevertheless, to be able to knock down a demon with a single attack that Sen’oni and I couldn’t deal serious injury to even by cooperating, as expected of my disciple.”

I could tell that Shisho was delighted from the bottom of his heart but recalling the scene of this person crying after I defeated the demon, perhaps he conducted the training under tremendous conflict within his heart.

“Luciel-sama, I’m glad that you are safe. Whirlwind, don’t you have something you have to say properly?”

Lionel showed a relieved expression seeing that I had recovered but he immediately said that after glancing over at Shisho and Shisho looked at me with a determined expression.

“I was about to say it... Luciel, regarding the training this time, I’m sorry.”

Then, Shisho abruptly sat down and prostrated to apologize to me.

My thought process grounded to a halt for a split second.

I couldn’t articulate well from the shock and somehow squeezed out a question.

“...For?”

Lionel replied to that instead of Shisho who was prostrating on the ground.

“Apparently, the Prophet in the guild headquarters made a prophecy. That soon he would protect somebody and die. That’s why he lowered his head to us to proceed with that unreasonable training and hushed us.”

A prophecy from a Prophet of the guild... but I don’t think he would normally believe it?

But since the mines between Meratoni and Grandol disappeared and the incidents with dragons, spirits, demons and reincarnated person happened one after another, I guess it’s not unreasonable that he believed it.

So everyone did not tell me about it because he asked them to keep quiet about it?

I felt the story begin to add up.

It’s true that it was a severe training but I couldn’t wipe away the feeling that I ended up pressuring Shisho.

I spoke to everyone after helping Shisho up.

“Perhaps we’ve also mentally pressured Shisho into a corner? Furthermore, I’ve somehow survived anyway.”

After becoming the guildmaster of the Adventurer’s Guild branch, he’s not been active

as an adventurer for at least 7 years so it can't be helped that he had weakened from inactivity.

Since Shisho is the type to do what he's set his mind to thoroughly.

"Nevertheless, I was still shocked when he crushed your eyes and destroyed your eardrums nya. I could only view the person who still continued training in that state and the person who conducted the training as abnormal nya."

"It was the first time I observed Luciel-sama's training but I feel like I had a glimpse of what people call a spirit of steel."

Kefin immediately followed up after Cathy's honest opinion but I could tell that he was trying to draw attention away from her.

Maybe they weren't enduring their laughter but actually killing their thoughts that he had gone crazy?

"Well, normally one would use an eye mask instead of crushing the eyes and ear plugs instead of breaking the eardrums but since Shisho does not do anything meaningless, I decided to trust Shisho."

When I said that, Shisho gave out an awkward aura for some reason and absolutely did not make eye contact.

"Shisho?"

But Shisho remained silent.

"I understand the relationship between mentor and disciple. Even so, it was too excessive and I couldn't help but worry."

"The spirits and I were worried too."

Lydia and Nadia broke the silence and there were no smiles on their faces as they were still worried even now.

My heart squeezed a little after seeing the expressions they made.

While noticing that Estia wasn't present, I asked about what happened after that.

“What happened after that?”

“About half a day has passed since that battle. Right before Luciel’s swing, the demon mustered the last of its strength to craft a mixed magic of Darkness and Wind and countless small holes appeared throughout your body. But it gave the feeling that they would remain there without disappearing. Since it was impossible for normal healing magic to cure that, I permitted the use of [Extra Heal] that is capable of healing everything.”

I would have died if I made even a slight error. Feeling terrified at that thought, I changed the topic.

“By the way, I don’t see Estia around?”

“Estia?”

Shisho acted like he could not remember Estia.

Although Lionel and the others remembered her, their memories for these couple of days were hazy.

There’s no doubt that the Darkness Spirit used quite some power.

Among them, only the Spirit-user Lydia properly grasped Estia presence.

“If it’s Estia-san, she’s sleeping in the neighboring room. It seems like she overused the Spirit’s power. She was reckless to the point that the Light Spirit had to be called forth.”

The Darkness Spirit might have planted the suggestion in me to take my Hermit’s Key from my item bag while I was asleep.

I vaguely sensed that Fornoir was the Light Spirit I saw but if the Darkness Spirit did not overdo it, there’s a high chance I would still be unconscious.

Even though I didn’t trust Estia, thinking of how Estia used her power for me to the point of collapse, I thought maybe I’ve been unconsciously looking at her with prejudice from the Empire slave and Darkness Spirit incidents.

Thanking Estia in my heart, I decided to also properly thank Fornoir and the Darkness Spirit.

I asked Shisho about the training since I had to end the training halfway.

“So Shisho, what kind of training has been planned for the future?”

“...Once you can sense your opponent without relying on your vision and hearing to a certain extent, you can have your vision and hearing back and the plan would be to have repeated mock battles. Your opponents would be one-vs-one with me and Sen’oni and against the remaining 5 simultaneously. I’ll say it beforehand that winning is not the goal. The finish line would be when you can see and remember Sen’oni and my combat well and we can gradually increase Luciel’s limit value by hunting monsters. Your goal was to become the strongest Healer but... you might already have become the strongest among Healers...”

Shisho stumbled for words for an instant but he happily said that with a smile.

Don’t tell me he plans to cancel the training? Unfortunately, I don’t have the intention to do that at all.

Then, if I can secretly drag him into the party as a helper, won’t I be able to break through all the labyrinths that have dragons in them? I began envisioning that blueprint.

Even so, I totally don’t feel like I can win in the mock battles that Shisho put together but thinking about the prophecy that Shisho would die protecting somebody, that somebody would probably be me.

If that’s the case, once I become stronger, Shisho would probably be able to calm down.

I decided to show some filial piety to my mentor.

“Then, we’ll rest for today and the training will start from tomorrow. However, Shisho, is the Adventurer’s Guild in Meratoni really fine?”

“Yeah. If there are any problems, I’ll be notified through this.”

Shisho said that and took out a magic communication bead.

“Magic communication bead huh? But isn’t that the type that has a certain range?”

“That’s right. That’s why I also asked the Adventurer’s Guild here if they received any messages and they said that the monster attacks at that side have ceased so there’s no

problem. Furthermore, it's been half a month since the training started."

"Half a month? I thought 20 days has already passed? Since we've had more than 60 meals?"

"Yeah. Since halfway through I changed to 5 to 6 meals a day so you might have been mistaken but since your stress levels would accumulate with little sleep, I distracted you with meals."

I've not heard of such logic? Shisho?

But I did not dispute it.

Since I was not able to hide my surprise that my perception abilities rose to Level III in just half a month.

As expected of a spartan training, it seems like it was quite a considerably useful special training.

After that, we talked for a bit before they invited me for dinner but I decided to refrain this time.

After checking that everyone had left the room, I opened the Hermit's stable and perhaps Fornoir was tired, I saw that she was sleeping.

I don't know if it has any effect but I activated [Extra Heal] and [Purification] before I closed the Hermit's stable.

"The training will start from tomorrow so even if my opponents are those I definitely cannot win against, I will at least obtain the strength to definitely be able to escape."

After swearing to my heart to clarify my aims, I took out the Transformation Dresser from my item bag and took off my armor before continuing to eat the meals in my item bag until I had my fill.

After that, I took out Angel's Pillow, prepared to sleep early so that I could be prepared for tomorrow and proceeded to consolidate my mental image on Presence Perception and Magical Power Perception.

Chapter 162

To the Labyrinth of Traps

It was still dark by the time I woke up but after rapidly circulating magical power within my body with magical power manipulation and performing mental images for the perception-type skills like how I did last night, the morning sun came out.

“Being able to see is wonderful after all.”

I earnestly thought so as I looked at the morning sun before leaving my room.

When I stepped out, I ran straight into Kefin so he was probably guarding my room.

“Good morning Kefin. Thank you for keeping a lookout.”

“Good morning.”

Kefin merely smiled but didn’t touch on the topic of keeping guard.

I didn’t really know how my training would be conducted so I asked Kefin.

“This past half a month, everyone had mock battles too right?”

“Yes. It was quite intense until Luciel-sama lost your hearing. After you lost your hearing, we began technique training and your [High Heal] when the repetitive training had caused our fatigue to accumulate really helped us.”

“...Well, a certain degree of preparedness is needed when under Shisho’s instructions. Moreover, Shisho and Lionel’s fundamentals deviate from the norm...”

“Indeed...”

Kefin and I both laughed when we both nodded in sync.

Only the word harsh can fit the experience of being worked hard by those two.

“They probably thoroughly investigated the ant labyrinth before guiding me in right?”

“Yeah. Whirlwind-sama did a preliminary examination on everything. He looked quite

worried as he was fidgeting most of the time but training became stricter when we ended up laughing.”

To either be overprotective or to be spartan, Shisho couldn’t be clear.

While feeling just slightly exasperated, I thought of heading to Estia’s place but it felt a bit too early so I asked Kefin.

“I wish to visit Estia but I have a feeling it’s a bit too early right now?”

“Yes. Estia is currently in the same room with Cathy and those sisters so do you think it is a good choice to visit that room before breakfast time?”

It was a reply that I had anticipated so I wasn’t flustered.

“I see. Has anything out of the ordinary happened?”

“No, there hasn’t.”

I boldly used this chance to try asking Kefin for his true feelings.

“Do you not feel uneasy with the Spirit blessings or going into labyrinths to release the dragons?”

“No. On the contrary, I’m thrilled by it. Just like how when Whirlwind-sama told us about the prophecy that he would die protecting someone and that he wishes for Luciel-sama to inherit his techniques, I also wish to see the time when Luciel-sama is heralded as a hero.”

Kefin said with shining eyes.

“I think writing my biography would not be very interesting though?”

“That depends on how the people writing it view it.”

I thought to myself that unless I leave behind achievements that approach Rainstar-dono’s level, it wouldn’t really be enjoyable to read.

We headed to the canteen after finishing that morning conversation and while waiting for the others, I asked Kefin about his impression on perception skills and his mental image when using them. He said that although he doesn’t understand Magical Power Perception, he perceives by olfaction and presence.

I realized that the skill image differs among humans and the various races.

“What about Cathy?”

“I’ll discuss with her if we have the chance during our journey back to Ienith. Since I also wish to talk with Naria-san about it too.”

Looking at Kefin’s slightly embarrassed smile, I could tell that he could not completely hide his happiness aura.

“Please think of the future as well when considering my offer to release you from slavery. Though I would hope that you continue as my follower.”

“Yes.”

After that, everyone else gradually gathered and even Estia who I was worried about came to say she was fine and to eat breakfast so I was relieved.

“Shisho, do you have any place in mind for the mock battle location?”

“Yeah. I’m sorry for bringing up unwanted memories for the 2 sisters there but I think we should go to the Labyrinth of Traps.”

There’s no reason to go there.

The dragon has already been released and even though I’m worried about the core, it is a weapon used to call the Evil God so I’d prefer not to approach it if possible.

“...Why?”

“Because the Labyrinth of Traps is just right for leveling up. Furthermore, Sen’oni and I will also be fighting the monsters without holding back to complete our final preparations.”

“Luciel-sama, this is a request of mine not as a retainer but as a warrior.”

There was no way I could say no after Shisho and the others appealed to me as warriors so I gave up.

We should be fine as long as we don’t touch the core and though I’ll definitely be going to the Labyrinth of Traps, I sought confirmation from Nadia and Lydia.

“...Okay. Nadia, Lydia, what do you want to do? Will you come with us? Or part with us here?”

Not wanting to make them recall painful memories, I could not ask them to follow us.

The 2 of them looked at each other and both nodded as Nadia spoke.

“Please allow Lydia and me to accompany you all. Since we feel that we will be able to aim for greater heights as adventurers when we are with everyone here.”

She asserted.

“Kefin, I believe the detection and removal of traps will be harder than the labyrinths we’ve been in until now but I’ll entrust it to you. Cathy, please support him.”

“”Yes!””

“Estia, I will be relying on you this time too.”

“Er, yes. The same goes for me too.”

She looked surprised that I suddenly lowered my head but while wishing that she would be able to somehow adapt to our party, I decided on our objective for the future.

After checking out from the inn and purchasing large amounts of food, we departed for the Labyrinth of Traps.

After departing, Nadia passed me the Holy Dragon Spear and Illusionary Sword.

“Thanks. But why are they with Nadia?”

“The dragon’s power apparently repulse the others. Even I can only hold onto it but not wield it so I stored it in my magic bag.”

“I see.”

When I channeled magical power into the Holy Dragon Spear and Illusionary Sword, a pale light spread throughout my body and scarlet, brown and yellow circles of light appeared and disappeared in sequence.

Realizing that they were my exclusive weapons made me slightly excited.

In order to cool myself down, I closed my eyes and focused on using my whole body to search for magical power and presence.

Is this any different from searching for enemies? My consciousness expanded even as I pondered that question and although it was hard to sense presences, I found something with magical power perception but... for some reason, the sense disappeared just as it appeared.

When I was curious and asked Cathy and Kefin who were in the driver's seat, the 2 cavalries had already defeated the presences like it was natural.

I felt that the 2 of them were really gradually becoming more amazing.

Then, after the carriage ran non-stop for 3 hours, we arrived in the vicinity of the Labyrinth of Traps.

After seeing the Labyrinth of Traps, I decided on the first words to use.

"What the heck is this?"

It's without a doubt the location of the labyrinth going by the map but, for some reason, there was a towering mountain in place.

"That's strange. When we entered it, it was like a cave."

Nadia looked at Lydia for her agreement but Lydia seemed like she didn't hear it.

"...I hear a voice."

Lydia muttered and begin walking.

"...It might be a spirit so let's follow her. We might even be able to find out the reason for this."

Although she was only walking along the mountain instead of climbing the mountain, she only followed the words she heard and walked while completely defenseless even when the bird-type monsters approached from the skies so it became a strange group formation where all the members walked while defending Lydia.

"It must be the influence of something after all for these number of monsters to appear. If I'm not mistaken, this should be the mine that occupied the space between Grandol and Meratoni."

“...If that’s the case then monsters with attacks that cause abnormal conditions will appear too?”

“Yeah. Moreover, they should be strong... it’s quite mysterious but it has become interesting.”

Shisho was rather pleased.

After continuously walking for less than an hour since we caught up to Lydia, I noticed the smell of sulfur.

I could only associate the smell with hot springs but when I studied the local specialties and places of interest of various lands a long time ago in the past, it wasn’t written that there were hot springs in this region?

I followed after Lydia while having that thought but before that, Kefin and Cathy looked like they were suffering so I passed them nose plugs.

While thinking that for beastmen who possess many times stronger olfactory sense than ordinary people, the unique smell of hot springs should be quite painful for them, we advanced and saw a geyser gushing out.

“You’ll get burnt if you touch it so please be careful.”

I explicitly told everyone since [Area Barrier] can’t prevent that from happening.

Then, Lydia abruptly placed her hand on the surface and a magic circle formed, causing a little fire bird that emitted scorching heat to appear from the scarlet magic circle.

If I could only see it visually like before, I might have made a fool of myself but even without closing my eyes, I could tell it exuded amazing presence.

Lydia seemed like she was about to collapse like her role had ended so her elder sister Nadia supported her.

<I am the Fire Spirit. The person with the Spirit King’s blessing dwelling in her body, the person who has received many spirit blessings and the person who receives the affection of the Darkness Spirit. You’ve done well to come.>

A ceremonious voice unimaginable from the little bird in front of my eyes echoed in my head.

“Fire Spirit. Seeing that you beckoned the girl holding the Spirit King’s blessing in a manner that would not be an exaggeration to say it was against one’s will, is there an emergency?”

<It helps that I’m able to speak to many blessing holders at once. Actually, in the gap when I was sleeping, this mountain was transferred.>

“Transferred?”

<Indeed. The ones capable of this should only be the demons but I can’t sense the magical power of demons at all.>

If it’s not the work of man, doesn’t it mean it’s the work of the Evil God?

I had a terribly bad feeling about it.

“...Still, we won’t be able to demolish something like this and our objective is the Labyrinth of Traps that was supposed to be here...”

<Umu. Don’t misunderstand me. For this mountain right beside us that has been transferred, I can reverse the transfer.>

That means, there is only one thing the spirit wants of us.

“...You mean to say you want my magical power?”

<Exactly. It’s not just for my sake alone. If such a large landform like this is transferred, the habitats around the mountain will undergo changes and even the flow of the stars will change.>

“...What should we do?”

<Umu. Let me first give you my blessing. Then raise both your hands and overlay them like you are wrapping them around each other.>

When I reluctantly raised both my hands and overlaid them, the mechanical sound of an announcement flowed through my brain.

<Fire Spirit’s Blessing acquired.>

<Well then, firmly hold onto your consciousness.>

The moment it came into contact with me, it gradually enlarged until it transformed into the figure of the legendary undying bird Phoenix.

While feeling impressed at its appearance, I looked towards everyone's direction and even though Estia and Lydia were shocked, in comparison, Shisho and the others were only staring at me without looking upwards.

I recalled that only the kin of spirits could see them but thanks to that, I was able to calm down as there was not much excitement from their side as my feet staggered from the continuous sucking of my magical power.

Then, when I was left with about 1%, the Phoenix cried and the mountain disappeared with a flash.

<Holder of the Spirit King's blessing, refine yourself so that I will be willing to obey you. Holder of the many spirit blessings, I will await your call.>

I don't know if it was a phoenix or a salamander but the Fire Spirit disappeared.

I knelt down after somehow weathering through.

It felt like it was Space-time magic that used to transfer that mountain but I guess anything goes for spirits.

And I understood that that power is not something man may utilize.

I took a deep breath and explained to everyone who was worried about what happened.

"...If that's what happened, the distance to Meratoni will return to the 2 days travel like before. Well, if the spirit corrected the distortion in the world, it can't be helped."

I also thought so but I had slight suspicions that it just didn't like the mountain being in this area.

"However, after the mountain is gone, we can tell that we're a distance away from the labyrinth."

Since we walked all the way here, we could no longer see the labyrinth.

“Although the spirit was unreasonable, this time the mountain was returned so the outcome is all right? Lydia is fine too?”

“It seems like I have slight magical power depletion but I’m all right.”

“Do you have any magical power potion?”

“I’ll be fine after resting for a bit.”

Lydia declined the potion.

“Is that so? Then, we’ll rest for awhile and Nadia, could you briefly explain the monsters and traps that appear in the Labyrinth of Traps?”

“Okay.”

“That’s important too but we should eat when we have the time to eat.”

Since Shisho put forth his suggestion, we ate an early lunch as we combined knowledge from Nadia and Lydia who actually dived into the Labyrinth of Traps as well as the information gathered by Shisho and Kefin to challenge the labyrinth with the shared information.

Chapter 163

As expected of another dimension

As expected of the labyrinth called the Labyrinth of Traps, there were traps scattered everywhere.

The troublesome thing was that the traps would regenerate after some time after they've been disarmed so it didn't look like it would be easy breaking through the labyrinth.

People have cleared the labyrinth countless times in the past but it's apparently a forbidden labyrinth where none of the parties ever returned without casualties.

That should have been the case but Shisho and Kefin were disarming one trap after the other and we didn't even encounter many monsters.

"Compared to other labyrinths, not only are the walls and ceilings distorted, do monsters not appear in this labyrinth as well? Or is it because it is a labyrinth where monsters truly don't appear unless the traps are activated?"

When I closed my eyes, I was shocked at the intensity of the pure magical power in this labyrinth.

We've only traveled through the first half of the labyrinth until the 10th floor but we've been advancing without entering battle even once.

However, I felt a sense of pressure where it wouldn't even be strange if a demon appeared.

"During our time here, we got caught in a trap on the 15th floor and encountered the hydra so I don't think weak monsters will appear."

They were behaving stout-heartedly but the sisters were, in fact, trembling so

although I could empathize with their will to conquer their trauma, it doesn't look like we can count on their participation in combat.

It looks like they have disarmed the final trap before the entrance to the 10th-floor boss room.

"Since the monster in the boss room is random, take action instantaneously after seeing the boss... Luciel, are you really fine with this?"

The boss in the boss room is randomized. When we obtained this information, it was determined that I would be the first to enter the boss room.

"Yes. If possible, I hope I draw a ghost-type monster."

I commented as I opened the door and advanced. Raising my weapons and moving to the center, the monster that appeared was the pitiful Big Wraith.

When I activated [Purification] with [No Chant], it was purified completely in one go and it disappeared along with a pale light.

"Easy victory. Well then, Shisho, Kefin, I'll be relying on you 2 once again."

When I said that with a smile, for some reason, Shisho sighed, Lionel and the others made wry grins and the sisters were astonished.

"Please don't forget that we came here to fight?"

Shisho found fault in my actions.

Although it's a labyrinth where monsters don't appear at all, the 2 of them were tasked with disarming a serious amount of traps as we advanced peacefully.

Then, when we arrived at the 15th floor, Shisho shot a question at the sisters.

"Do you wish to overcome your trauma by fighting the hydra? Do you wish to win

even if it's with everyone's help?"

The 2 of them nodded even though they had pale complexions.

"Well, considering the lack of opponents till now, shall we make them appear?"

"Please do avoid instant deaths okay?"

Everyone nodded to my remark.

I won't let anybody die, including myself. I once again swore to myself that I will keep everyone alive and not let any casualties appear as we entered the transfer zone to the hydra's location under the 2 sister's guidance and we were warped over.

My impression of it was a kind of multi-headed dragon so it won't be strange if a breath attack was sent flying over.

Even though I was beaten black and blue when I fought with the Fire Dragon a year ago, for some reason, I completely didn't feel any fear this time.

""""""Gugyaooooo!""""""

It's roar threatened to shake even the labyrinth itself and the echoes were extremely noisy so I involuntarily replied with a yell.

"Stop barking you 5-headed small fry!!"

Because I yelled at the hydra, it seemed to have turned hostile towards me and decided to target me but I was completely unafraid perhaps because it was a dragon-type.

I quickly activated [Area Barrier] and observed Shisho and Lionel's movements closely while grasping the movements of the others.

While holding my Holy Dragon Spear and Illusionary Sword up, I noticed that the hydra appeared cautious towards Shisho and me which made me remember that Shisho had also slain a dragon before.

Matching gazes with Shisho, he approached me and instructed me on the guide to attacking hydras.

“Listen well Luciel, the multi-headed dragon typically releases long-distance breath attacks but only 2 or 3 of the heads will release the breaths at the same time. Apart from that, it will only attack by either biting or by using its tail.”

“It won’t try to claw using those thick arms?”

“It won’t do so when it releases its breath attack. What you must take note is to not stand directly in front or behind it. If you’re beside it, it would be easier to attack as you can tell which head would be releasing the breath. Watch.”

Shisho left with those words and without me noticing, appeared a few steps beside the hydra that was 30 meters away. While avoiding the breaths, he sliced off its right arm near the shoulder instead of its head and kicked the dragon’s head before returning to my side.

“I forgot to mention but in the case of multi-headed dragons, their heads are capable of regenerating and when you thought that another fire breath will follow after it released a fire breath, beware that the next breath might be a petrification breath. Sen’oni, I’ll be beheading it since it’s getting troublesome so please help me scorch it.”

Shisho, first thing first, I don’t think I’m capable of those movements.

He’ll probably not listen to my complaints but if I become capable of movements similar to Shisho, I believe I would definitely be world-class.

“Don’t be late in escaping and get caught in the fire.”

“Who do you think I am? I’ll leave a single head.”

Shisho said and laughed at Lionel’s joke and once again approached the hydra from an opposite side this time at a tremendous speed before sending its left arm flying and he tossed something from his chest pocket.

The next instant, an intense light was released.

Flash bang!? While I was surprised, Lionel activated his Flaming Greatsword and after

he swung it 4 times at a speed I could barely register, 4 fireballs of about 2 meters in diameter flew forth with amazing momentum.

Then, they impacted the hydra in the blink of an eye, burning the base of the necks.

When I was still surprised by the explosion of the impact, Shisho was already beside me laughing without me noticing.

“See? If you attack from the side, you won’t have to worry about getting damage right?”

I feel bad for Shisho who had a beaming smile but I would totally not be able to use this battle as a reference.

I exclaimed in my heart but I only gave a bitter smile on the surface.

No, not only myself, I’m certain all the other members other than Shisho and Lionel would not be capable of pulling off the battle that just took place.

I totally could not understand why a person possessing the ability to insta-kill a hydra would be stationed in the guild and why Shisho would retire from adventuring.

“Gugyaaaaa!”

My thoughts were drowned out by the cry of the now single-headed hydro that was still intent on fighting.

“You can become a Dragon Slayer as long as you deal damage. Everyone come give it some scratches.”

Lionel announced to all the members.

Reluctantly, I took command from that point.

“Beware of the breath and although we can’t be certain that the heads won’t regenerate, if you wish to deal damage, please attack the wounds where the arms were sliced off or the stumps of the necks. Please just beware of the breath attack.”

“”Yes!”” “””Yes.”””

We begin a combined attack against the hydra.

Lydia raised her Spirit Staff and after muttering something, a flame spear and wind spear appeared in mid-air before flying towards and directly striking the hydra.

The hydra raised a tremendous bellow either due to anger from the pain or irritation towards the lower-rank attack compared to the one that left it with one head.

I stood directly in front of it so I was expecting a breath attack to come but contrary to my expectations, it rotated its body to use its tail. Just as it was about to mow us, me including Estia and Nadia, down, Cathy and Kefin kicked off the wall and gouged at its wound.

Thanks to that, the 3 of us didn't fall prey to its tail.

It turned its focus towards Cathy to spit out a breath attack but it was already too late.

Estia and Nadia thrust their swords into the stumps of its arms as I, in the state of having channeled my full energy to strengthen my body, swung my Illusionary Sword to slice off its final head.

Then, to be doubly sure, I pierced the stump of the neck that I beheaded with my Holy Dragon Spear.

The hydra staggered and crumbled as it collapsed backward, leaving only a magic stone in place after disappearing.

It somehow felt like it was the first time I defeated a monster with a party.

But I decided to honestly rejoice today for gaining victory over a big foe.

Would one immediately become a Dragon Slayer upon defeating the hydra?

There might be some who are curious about that but it's apparently common knowledge that you will only acquire the title if you manage to leave the labyrinth.

It probably means that we're in combat until we return.

Nevertheless, even though Shisho and Lionel's strengths were slightly too much in a different dimension such that they couldn't be taken as a reference, I spurred myself on to approach their strength ever so slightly by the time I leave this labyrinth to reach the peaceful life I desire.

Chapter 164

Random Boss

It's great that we defeated the hydra but the problem came after that.

The magic circle we came in by wouldn't start up and when we dove into the magic circle the sisters used when they somehow escaped the hydra, we appeared at the entrance to the first floor.

"My trap detection and disarming skill will likely increase if we continue doing this for a long time."

Shisho was the first to react to my comment.

"Now that I think about it, didn't I make you study on how to disarm a trap long ago? It's a good opportunity now so let me teach you."

The moment he said that and smacked my shoulder, I realized that I had dug my own grave.

This time, our goal was to reach the 10th-floor boss room but unlike the labyrinths I've been in, it would take no earlier than a couple of hours to once again arrive at the 10th floor even if we knew the paths in this labyrinth. There were that many traps to that extent.

Well, apart from the pitfall traps and transfer traps, the other traps were only arrows or needles that cause poison or paralysis so it didn't look like it would pose a problem even if I advance by taking them all with my body.

While I had such thoughts, I decided to refrain from saying such rash remarks.

It's said that the mouth is the cause of calamity and I had a premonition that something even more terrible will befall me once I say that so I concentrated on searching for the distortion in magical power within the labyrinth as we advanced.

By the time we finally arrived at the 10th-floor boss room, my stomach was already

empty and although Shisho boo-ed at my performance, the female team thanked me for my work so I didn't feel irritated.

Shisho looked on as he opened the door leading to the boss room so I had no choice but to proceed and the boss waiting inside was a robot-like golem.

"Shisho, is that boss clad in lightning?"

Well rather than lightning it's more like electricity but if there are impurities mixed within then it should short-circuit if it touches water but... is the water created by Lydia's Spirit Magic pure water? It happened when I was still lost in thought.

"It's troublesome so I'll just go kill it."

Shisho said before running towards the golem.

The golem released a lightning attack at the approaching Shisho but he easily dodged it and I could tell he stabbed at the golem continuously but the moment his attacks landed, the golem crumbled into pieces and turned into a magic stone.

"What happened exactly?"

As expected it was Lionel who replied me.

"Both golems and slimes possess a nucleus and if that is broken, they will not be able to maintain their form and breakdown. Whirlwind probably destroyed the nucleus by stabbing various locations at high speeds."

I could understand the explanation but it would be a 'no' if you asked me if I could do it.

This person really possesses the strength of a different dimension.

"Luciel, we'll be staying here today. We'll be having a mock battle after our meal."

"...Okay."

I couldn't decide if I was fortunate or unfortunate to have the opportunity to spar with this Shisho of a different dimension.

Well, what await me is a hopeless gap in combat prowess so I should be able to fight

without holding back.

I purified the boss room while having that thought and when I took out the self-cooking utensils, it seemed like Estia and the sister are able to cook properly.

Cathy looked like she was staring at them from afar so I told her to do it together with them and asked them to kindly teach her how to cook.

I laughed when Kefin bowed towards me deeply.

However, that was where my laughter came to an end.

“Luciel, you can attack whichever way you want. I’ll wait for your attack before retaliating. I’ll let you know beforehand that you’ll lose consciousness in one go without your barrier so remember to set it up before you attack.”

He had not surprise attacked me like before so I felt that he had become gentler.

Until now...

Whenever I attacked while in physically strengthened condition, he would definitely be ready with a counter technique.

Whenever I attacked with a straight punch, a cross counter will be waiting for me every time.

Furthermore, considering it’s a mock battle, he taught me my combat style and weapon handling style in more detail compared to before.

While explaining the pros and cons of sword techniques, spear techniques, double spear techniques and taijutsu utilizing bare hands, we sparred countless times and he showed me counters.

“Luciel, what you have obtained from the training until now is the ability to predict the opponent by sensing the movement of presence and magical power. It would have been impossible to learn this in half a month without a proper foundation. Furthermore, the person’s disposition is important. To be able to have hyper-

sensitivity to sensing danger, it would be impossible without the resolution to not waver, to never give up and to not back down. Now then, you now stand at the brink of the finish line so try defeating me.”

Shisho said to ignite my fighting spirit.

“Here I come.”

I strengthened my body and released an attack the same instant I activated [High Heal] but I was rolling on the ground the next moment.

“Luciel, attacks where you disregard the damage to your body is effective during certain times but it is not the right choice every time. Look at your opponent properly. If you are always conscious of your opponent’s movements using your perception skills, you have the potential to accumulate that image into your experience.”

He was saying phrases like from a manga protagonist aiming to be the world strongest but is it actually possible to break through the bounds of talent?

“ [Middle Heal] ... Shisho, are you talking about future sight and future prediction?”

“Only a handful of individuals blessed with innate talent will be capable of that. But, even for ordinary people like me and you, we are capable of surpassing people who possess that talent. By imagining strong and concrete battles and accumulating combat experience, it is possible to surpass them. Although if you don’t continue doing so, the ones with innate talent will quickly catch up to you.”

Shisho lightly scratched his head as he said that.

But, sadly, when Shisho grouped me together with him, it completely lost its persuasive power.

Rather than that, I have doubts as to whether Shisho is actually an ordinary person.

“Shisho, I don’t understand why you would think of yourself as an ordinary person.”

“...I dreamed of becoming an Imperial Knight since I was young but I was discharged when I was 15 years old. So I had no choice but to become an adventurer but I was stuck as an E-rank even until I was 20 years old. Then, I had a chance to meet the S-rank adventurer party at that time and I got to know the gramps in the party and had

the opportunity to begin training. For five years, I spat blood and endured the gramps' training with a steel spirit until, without me noticing, I reached the position where I was on par with the S-rank. Luciel, that's why even though you don't have innate talent, you who possess the talent of hard work and perseverance is my disciple and my successor."

To be honest, I could not believe that story but it didn't look like Shisho was lying.

At that time, I suddenly remembered my previous life.

The successful colleague who entered the company at the same time and had the same sales position suddenly stalled on the 3-year mark, got demoted and left the company.

While I who always could not get promoted and had results that barely meet the requirements remained.

Our sociable manner was about the same but he had better knowledge and speech so he was steadily promoted from the first year.

In comparison, until the 3rd year, I still continued to struggle with only newbie contracts.

Just like the fairy tale of the rabbit and the tortoise, I did not even advance half the pace of the rabbit's progress but by increasing the number of cold-call telephone appointments, memorising the unique quirks of the negotiation partners, slowly creating new customers, and acquiring recommendations, I reversed the situation after 3 years.

The reason why I did not give up then was... ah, I see.

I was simple and naive too.

When I look back, I could recall the reason why I worked so hard at that time.

I have apparently forgotten about how even if the laws and environment changed compared to my previous life, there were still some aspects of this world that resembled my past world and that this was an extremely benevolent world towards those who continue to work hard.

Did I reach Level X in Holy attribute magic because I had talent in it?

If I'm asked that, I would deny it.

Similarly, by having plenty of training at Shisho's place, the result is that I've now defeated many monsters.

"For now, I'll do everything I can but I am still just a Healer so please go easy on me."

"I'll first instruct you on how to satisfactorily handle your weapons. Next, to make you capture the flow of the battle, I'll make you conscious of all your perception skills. Lastly, I'll have you understand the whole picture by having you take command. Because you are just simply a Healer. Well, it won't trouble you if you become stronger."

"...Well, that is true."

"...You've suddenly become so obedient."

"I carry the title of being your disciple so rather than object hesitantly, it seemed better and more refreshing to squarely exchange blows."

"I'll be knocking you out before that."

Thus, my special training with Shisho continued until the food was ready.

After having our meals, I sparred with Lionel and when everyone was training with Shisho, my training for today ended to allow for me to recover.

The next morning, everyone begin to wake up just about when I finished making meals for everyone since I was the first to wake up.

Then, when the female team asked me for the recipe and I passed them the recipe collection that I have not taken out for a long time, it became a lively breakfast.

After our meal, we resumed our dive into the Labyrinth of Traps.

Because I was receiving instructions from Shisho and Kefin about trap removal, our advancing speed was extremely slow but since monsters didn't appear, we advanced while steadily disarming traps.

“All things considered, wasn’t the map for the labyrinth expensive?”

“It was 10 gold coins. It’s because while the traps in this labyrinth regenerate, the treasure chests regenerate too. It’ll probably not be that much of a loss. Although that’s including the hope that we find treasures.”

The labyrinth dive proceeded with that kind of peaceful atmosphere and when Lionel opened the door to the 20th-floor boss room, the opponent was a giant Cyclops.

“...Aren’t Shisho and Lionel’s luck way too bad?”

However, since Shisho and Lionel were both combat maniacs, in spite of the Cyclops appearing, they were both delighted.

“Then, this time I’ll be the one going out.”

He said that and requested for the large shield kept in my item bag as well as an [Area Barrier] before running towards the Cyclops.

“That’s still pushing it a bit too far...”

Just as I was about to give out instructions to everyone, Shisho caught my shoulder.

“There’s no way Sen’oni would lose to a monster like that. I don’t think it will be useful as a reference to you but watch carefully.”

Even though I trusted his words, I was standing by prepared to activate healing magic at any given time.

Cathy next to me looked uneasy too as we watched Lionel’s back as he advanced forward.

The Cyclops was an one-eyed humanoid but it was truly a giant with a height greater than 10 meters, a body that supports that height and an intimidating aura that was close to the one from that Red Dragon.

But Lionel did not slow his advance and when he entered the Cyclops’ range, it swung down its arm towards Lionel.

Lionel predicted that and even though the floor sunk down from the impact when he stopped it with his large shield, he splendidly received the attack and sliced off the large tree trunk-sized right wrist with his flaming greatsword.

We who were watching could not understand the reason why but as it screamed in pain, it used its other arm as if to clobber Lionel from the side but he once again received it with his large shield and without minding the slight depression made to the ground, he sliced off its left wrist.

The Cyclops did not give up and this time, it tried to stomp down but Lionel easily avoided it and after slicing off its right ankle, it could no longer get up.

Then, Lionel called out towards our direction.

“There’s a chance one might become a Giant Slayer so please put in an attack.”

I feel bad for the Cyclops but I placed a single blow.

It’s exactly like power leveling and we’re like leeching off him but since it’s not a game, I gladly accepted it.

After that, Lionel sent the collapsed Cyclops’ head flying and the combat ended.

We took a short break there and departed after we had a light meal and reaffirmed our goal but as expected, there were no signs of monsters as we silently advanced and by the time we reached the 30th-floor boss room, my Trap Disarm and Trap Detection skills leveled up by 2 each.

I opened the door.

A headless knight on a black horse appeared.

It’s probably a Dullahan.

I tried activating Sanctuary Circle before combat. Since I thought that it would disintegrate if it was an undead.

However, it seemed like it was not an undead but a type of sprite so I attacked with everyone.

Shisho and Lionel had their arms crossed so I guessed that the 2 of them won't be participating as I gave out commands to everyone else.

I'm not as strong as Shisho and Lionel to be able to fight alone.

"Cathy, Kefin, please attack from the sides, Lydia, use your Spirit Magic, Estia and Nadia will join me to bring down the horse while keeping an eye on the knight."

After I activated [Area Barrier] on everyone, something unexpected happened when we approached the Dullahan.

When Cathy and Kefin attacked first and intersected, the Dullahan fell off its horse.

When Lydia released Spirit Magic and Estia and Nadia stabbed the horse with their swords to be sure, the Dullahan disappeared and dropped 2 magic stones.

"Was it weakened by the [Sanctuary Circle]? Or was there a factor that worked on the sprite?"

I muttered as I turned back to seek Shisho and Lionel's advice but they gave me the same expression as when I defeated the King Wraith at the start.

I realized that I would definitely not be allowed to open the boss room doors for the duration of this training. *(TL: Lol Great Luck-sensei is still working behind the scenes?)*

Chapter 165

Broad versus Lionel

As I was the first to wake up, I began making breakfast for everyone just like yesterday.

Yesterday, after we conquered the 30th floor, the 5 of us excluding Shisho and Lionel did Taijutsu training they referred to as mock battles.

In actual fact, we had to evade the Spirit Magic cast by Lydia from outside and while the remaining 4 people could grab one another, we could not grab hold for more than 3 seconds and it was something like a game of tag with irregular aikido rules.

The rule was to not resist the opponent but to move in the direction you are pulled towards so as to break the balance of the opponent but you had to evade the other 4 catchers while also evading the magic thrown from outside so it was an exercise that really tests your concentration towards the opponent's movements and the magical power from outside as you have to react accordingly to them.

But even when I was hit with the Spirit Magic or thrown using Taijutsu, it didn't hurt at all so it felt interesting like I had returned to my childhood.

Although, after that, we had mock battles with Shisho and Lionel yesterday and apart from the 2 of them, we all ended up like corpses and I had to heal everyone with [High Heal] ...

After breakfast, we advanced to the 40th floor but there were traps that I could not disarm so I had to leave it to Shisho and Kefin.

We still kept vigilance but as expected, not a single monster appeared even until we reached the 40th-floor boss room.

Shisho was the one who opened the door to the 40th-floor boss room.

"It probably doesn't matter who opens the door. Since our aim is to level up by defeating monsters here for a while and firmly continue training."

He said only that and quickly entered.

Since he mentioned that we might not be able to leave from the 50th floor and that we'll be battling here to level up, does that mean I'll finally be able to see the battle between the 2 of them?

I was slightly excited just from thinking about it.

The 40th-floor boss was a feathered monster with lion, goat and snake heads.

According to lore, Chimeras are capable of spitting breath attacks, they will scratch and bite when in close quarters but it seems like they also fly in midair.

If I have to choose, a Gryphon or Wyvern would probably be easier to fight...

For now, I activated [Area Barrier] on everyone and waited for Shisho's words... oops, he's already charging over.

As expected, it seems like he thinks that it's best if everyone approach it this time so while expanding my field of vision, I was standing by ready to cast healing magic anytime.

To be safe, so that it would be fine even if I get poisoned, the remaining magic bag was now being carried on Lydia's shoulder.

I felt that it would not be effective on me but the snake possessed poison, the goat released lightning and the lion spat out flame breaths.

But within this constrained space of an estimated 30 meter squared area, it was more disadvantageous for the Chimera than for us.

Since it would receive all our combined attacks once it stops its attack.

Although I could not make any moves since I didn't know how Shisho was planning to fight...

As I was thinking, Shisho once again threw a flash bomb from his chest pocket towards the Chimera and instantly closed in and beheaded the goat head with a flash.

“ [Recover]”

I immediately cast magic on Shisho.

Because I saw the tail with a poisonous snakehead bite him the instant the flash went off as though it had no effect on it.

Nevertheless, I wonder where did he obtain those flash bombs from... it's convenient so I want them too.

When I vaguely checked the combat situation, Lionel had swung his Flaming Greatsword and released a ball of flame.

Using flame on an opponent that spits out flames?

Despite my doubts, Lionel released a high-speed ball of flame towards the lion head which directly swallowed it and just as it was about to spit out a flame breath, Shisho appeared behind it and beheaded it, causing the head to explode when it fell off.

Lionel released the ball of flame just to grab the lion's attention and Shisho used that opportunity to behead the lion.

That perfect cooperation gave people the impression that they've been working as partners for many years.

There was a small explosion when the lion's head fell down so I activated [High Heal] on Shisho just to be safe as he stopped his attacks and returned to us when the Chimera was left in the state of having only its snakehead tail left.

“I overdid it a little but show me how you all defeat the flying poisonous snake.”

“Okay. Let's go, everyone.”

The feeling of chagrin welled up but it was probably a strong monster that was capable of instantaneously killing any of us at our current ability so we focused on just defeating the poisonous snake.

“Even if you level up and your physical ability rises, it would be meaningless if you can't utilize it. Also, through the countless fights, search for the monster's weak points.”

bad if either of their weapons got destroyed, I lent them the stock weapons I had.

They agreed to the condition that the mock battle would be stopped when either of their weapons breaks.

“It will be a draw if your weapon breaks even when you are dominating. Moreover, I don’t think I will be able to memorize your movements just by watching today or even if I watched countless times so both of you, please don’t lose.”

“At least support your mentor if you’re a disciple.”

“It’s the duty of the lord to support his retainer.”

“ [Area Barrier]. Very well, please show me a battle between the real Whirlwind and Sen’oni. Begin!!”

Shisho was the first to act upon the signal.

At a speed that I could barely register, towards Lionel who was defending with his large shield, Shisho attacked with high-speed continuous blows that validated his ‘whirlwind’ nickname, sending attacks to upper, middle and lower portions of the body while occasionally mixing in kicks as well.

What I could tell from those attacks was Shisho’s flexibility and wide range of motion due to his well-honed core and his footwork of particularly noteworthy.

Apart from when he kicks, the sole of his feet never left the ground and he shifted his weight using just his toes and heels... a real monster.

Although Lionel was one-sidedly on the defense, he was stopping all those flowing attacks with just the wind blades made from his sword pressure.

Furthermore, I could tell that during the times when Shisho kicked, Lionel returned with a shield bash multiple times and whenever Shisho’s posture collapsed even slightly, he would instantly try to slice at Shisho’s arms and feet with the straight sword he held in his right hand.

An ordinary opponent would likely not be able to withstand that pressure and their attacks would become sloppy.

Just when I had that thought,

Perhaps Lionel made a mistake but his hand that held the large shield was extended a bit too far to the right and Shisho attacked with a slash.

However, as though it was a trap, Lionel kicked his shield up, wielded his sword and slashed at Shisho with his posture broken and his other arm unexpectedly threw out sword pressure that formed into wind blades that sliced at Shisho's legs.

Shisho's left leg was immediately dyed red and he leaped backward with his other foot.

"You're good... Sen'oni."

"Hmph. With this, it's a draw."

Now that I looked closely, Shisho's sword that I thought Lionel blocked seemed to have reached Lionel before it hit his shield as his left arm was dyed red with blood.

Lionel looked as though he almost couldn't put strength into his left arm as I could tell his arm was shaking when he raised his large shield.

Shisho was in a condition where he could barely put weight on his left leg.

"Luciel, regarding that attack Sen'oni just used, it should be something that even you can use. Watch, feel and memorize it!"

The instant after Shisho shouted that to me, he stomped on the ground with his left foot and when he swung his sword at a high speed, I felt a wave of magical power.

Can I truly send out a flying slash too? I would be overjoyed if that is true but I did not have the time to think about it.

The next instant, more of the flying slash that was headed towards Lionel was sent over and over again.

"Don't look down on me Whirlwind!!"

Lionel also brandished his sword in a similar fashion but those flying slashes could not be compared with Shisho's.

Soft and rigid, light and heavy, for the flying slashes between Shisho and Lionel, Lionel outperformed Shisho.

But, when Shisho received the flying slashes with his sword, they disappeared like they were an illusion.

Then, the swords I lent to the 2 of them crumbled having served their purpose.

“This match is a draw.”

After I announced that, to be safe, I immediately healed them with [Extra Heal].

“Kukuku.” “Hahaha.”

Shisho and Lionel looked at each other in the face and they both began to laugh out loudly.

“That was dangerous. My attacks completely could not go through. Even when I thought I managed to slice off your arm, it didn’t fall off.”

“Same here, even though I was sure I sliced off your leg, it didn’t fall off.”

I totally could not understand why they were acting so strangely even though their attacks didn’t work but they both had refreshed faces.

“As long as we have Luciel, can’t we just go to the territory of the demons even now?”

“That’s because Luciel-sama’s Holy attribute magic has already become human race’s treasure.”

“But.” “Even so.”

“If Luciel(-sama) enters the demon’s territory, he won’t be able to survive.”

Even if there wasn’t such a worry, I originally do not plan to go there and neither do I want to go there.

Even if I receive a direct command from Pope-sama to go, I intend to absolutely refuse.

“Even if you say it together, I have no intention of going to the demon’s territory. If I were to ever go there, it would be after I have secured my safety when the demons have been sealed and no demons would appear in the demon’s territory.”

When that happens, I’ll be able to live... peacefully?

Despite my uneasiness, the 2 of them continued to talk about their mock battle.

“Even so, it is seriously refreshing to use my full strength.”

“It’s the same for me too. As expected, it was an excellent choice to follow Luciel-sama.”

I wanted somebody to say something to cool the heads of these 2 battle maniacs but looking at everyone else, they seemed like they were moved by the mock battle between 2 greatest fighters in humanity so I won’t be able to expect anything from them.

From that day, I studied while watching and feeling the battle between humanity’s greatest, raised my level by hunting high-level monsters and the training continued for another 10 days under the guidance of Shisho and Lionel as we continued to break through the labyrinth.

Chapter 166

Everyone's growth and Unforeseen circumstances

I fought with various kinds of monsters, desperately struggled to the death to defeat them and my level and status rose.

I felt that I got a ton of progress but I still had a sense of unease within me.

It has been 15 days since the training where I had my eyes crushed and it has been 40 days since we came to this Labyrinth of Traps.

Even though I should be growing stronger, I could not dispel the feeling that I was regressing.

I felt like I could fight more skillfully and accurately in the past as my core balance had become worse and my range of motions had become more limited too, possibly due to it being an adverse effect of leveling up too quickly. Above all else, my sword play was a mess.

This symptom began to appear when my Magical Power and Presence Perception skills reached Level V without me noticing.

Since I would have troubled the fighters beside me if I was a vanguard, I was seriously glad that I am a Healer.

Whenever I have mock battles with Shisho, I always get disheartened with my weak techniques.

If I liken Shisho and myself to a high altitude mountain, I would be at the foot of the mountain while he's at the peak.

I am climbing with the peak as my goal but even if I am chasing after Shisho's back, Shisho is already at the mountain peak so I can't even see him.

Everyone was telling me that I have become stronger but that was because my status and my sword technique, (magic) manipulation technique, and Taijutsu skill levels

just rose as well so it's not because of the training.

Well, this is also my fate due to my choice to be a Healer so even though it's mortifying, I will just continue working hard.

For self-defence martial arts for the sake of survival, leaving Shisho and Lionel's strength of another dimension aside, it should be achievable by investing time into it.

Although Shisho isn't one of my followers, with everyone else around, most incidents would generally pass without any problems.

I feel that by creating an environment that is conducive to a peaceful life, forming a family, building a village or town that my followers and said family can live in with peace of mind and gradually developing the place, I will be able to stand proud that I did my best with my life including my previous life.

I was working hard for that sake.

Even if I clear through this Labyrinth of Traps and learn attack magic at the Independent Magic City Nelldal, I will not go near the Elimasia Empire and the Principality of Blange. The Rubruk Kingdom is currently at war with the Elimasia Empire so even if I intend to visit the kingdom, I'll only do so after the war has settled down.

It might be a good idea to head to Rockford before returning to the Church and pass Dolan and the others the magic stones I obtained this round... all that comes after we clear this labyrinth though.

"All right."

After consolidating everything in my mind, I hit my face to raise my spirit and got up to begin preparing breakfast.

Everyone woke up in order and after we finished our meal as usual, Shisho spoke up.

"We will clear this labyrinth today but everyone has become very much stronger. Have confidence in yourself. If Sen'oni's words are true, you guys can probably easily win against the Church Headquarters' Paladin squads. But, carelessness is prohibited. I might be contradicting myself but anything can happen during a battle. Even if an abnormal situation occurs, you will be fine as long as you handle it calmly. Trust your

companions and let's clear this labyrinth."

"""""Ha!""""""

Everyone's senses were aligned and we achieved a satisfying start.

However, the labyrinth's irregularity started immediately.

There were monsters in the labyrinth.

It might seem natural but why would they appear when they normally don't? That question floated in my mind.

Even so, since we plan to clear the labyrinth, I only focused on the traps and advanced but I was bothered by one point.

"About the monsters that are appearing in this labyrinth, it's a labyrinth with the Lightning Dragon so I thought that monsters with a lightning attribute or the opposing attribute would appear but it's a chaotic mix without any set rules and I feel like the monsters aren't that strong either."

I couldn't say that the monsters appearing were weak.

There were intimidating monsters like ogres and minotaurs that would normally be a threat but after fighting with a Chimera and Cyclops, these monsters no longer have that much impact, furthermore, they just charged at us without thinking and we just let them activate the traps themselves and self-destruct.

There was a wealth of variety like fire-breathing crocodile-like monsters and acid-spitting big frogs but they were sent flying by Shisho's slashes so they didn't touch me at all.

"That's true. Moreover, it's strange that they don't drop magic stones. These monsters might actually be summoned monsters."

"Summoned? This staggering amount?"

"Magic stones, blood and magical power are needed as compensation for summoning but it is possible to summon with only magic stones. Well, it would be completely impossible to control them so it can probably only be used to buy time."

“...Is it that slave merchant? He seemed capable of summoning.”

“There’s no way to tell but I have no idea what’s this person’s intention for summoning these monsters.”

“...Is leveling his own level and the level of the monsters he uses unthinkable?”

“Only a person with a broken mind would make the monsters he summon fight among themselves. It’s even worse than playing with dolls.”

Shisho says that but the fact that they are being summoned means that there is the possibility that the person’s skill level is rising.

But, I suddenly thought of it. For a period of over a month, we spent our time at the 40th-floor boss room but the slave merchant did not pass through.

Taking that into consideration, he shouldn’t be able to survive that long assuming he doesn’t have a magic bag so it’s highly possible that he’s somewhere outside.

“It might be useless even if we think about it.”

“Yeah. After this ends, I’ll return to Meratoni and Luciel will learn magic right?”

“I’ll strive to give Shisho a shock.”

I said and laughed.

There were many heinous traps in the Labyrinth of Traps and there were many that were hard to disarm.

At those times, monsters would get caught in the traps before us so it felt to me that Great Luck-sensei was showing itself after a long time.

Then, we arrived in front of the 50th-floor boss room but the door was shut and I could not hear any sounds coming from inside.

“Do I open this door?”

Since it’s possible that it might become a Blue, Red and Yellow Dragon festival if either Shisho or Lionel open the final boss room.

Shisho felt that it would be interesting when I told him that but he reluctantly complied and gave up when everyone joined together against the idea.

After I applied [Area Barrier] on everyone and entered the boss room after opening the door, I saw a human figure standing there alone.

However, that presence was extraordinary and unlike before, I even felt a sense of fear.

The human figure was the slave merchant.

“Oh? The whimsical people who came to clear this labyrinth were you guys?”

“Slave merchant, did you clear this labyrinth on your own?”

“I have a name you know, Brad. I will summon a monster that I can call as my kin with this blood.”

It felt to me like the slave merchant named Brad was slightly tripping (neurotic) but he didn't seem to have touched the labyrinth core.

But there was something I was uneasy about.

“What happened to the returning magic circle? Isn't it strange that the magic circle hasn't appeared considering that the boss was defeated!?”

“Since I've enslaved it, it doesn't seem like it's considered to have been defeated. Well then, we finally had the chance to meet but I will be shattering your dreams and use those sisters as material to slaughter the Principality of Blange.”

After Brad's declaration, magic circles rose up from every magical point.

Isn't enslaving the boss way too out of the norm?

The instant I tsukkomi-ed in my heart, a high-speed slash was sent flying towards Brad.

Brad caught sight of it all and the slash did not reach him but the enormous ogre that appeared from the magic circle a step ahead of Brad was sliced apart.

However, the mental damage inflicted on Brad was huge.

“Mo, monster! Your level at that time was abnormally high but you shouldn't be this strong!!”

Without giving him a reply, Shisho, Cathy and Kefin paired, as well as Estia and Nadia paired crushed the monsters appearing from the magic circles one after the other, Lionel protected me and Lydia with his large shield as he sent balls of flame and slashes flying while Lydia attacked with Spirit Magic.

I precisely cast heal while giving support by casting spells depending on the combat situation, [Aura Coat] when they fought against monsters that leaked miasma or [Recover] when against monsters that seem to have poison and paralysis.

“Im, impossible, how did your levels rise so suddenly. Exactly what kind of cheat did you use. Shit, damn it, you piles of shit!!”

Looking as if he could not believe the monsters he held confidence in disappear one after the other, Brad retreated backward.

Then, he lost his temper when it didn’t go as he desired.

He took out and scattered a large amount of magic stones on the floor, cut his palm with a sword to drip blood onto the magic stones and began constructing a huge magic circle.

Similarly, I intended to crush the magic circle with [Sanctuary Circle] but Lionel motioned me to wait.

“Luciel-sama, the return magic circle has not appeared yet so the one that will emerge now will probably be the original boss. If that’s the case, let’s slice them up including that summoner there once the summoning is complete.”

I listened to Lionel and looked at Shisho before agreeing with his judgment.

“All right. Hold fast.”

“Yes!”

The moment the magic circle’s construction was complete, all the other monsters disappeared.

Then, from the huge magic circle that gathered everyone’s gaze, a Chimera appeared.

Brad’s complexion was extremely bad as if he was on the verge of magical power depletion but he laughed at us who did not react to the Chimera.

“Hahaha. How’s this!! This Chimera is my greatest trump card. Since you’ve all been seen by it, become its food and die!!”

Immediately after Brad triumphantly declared his win, the Chimera targeted Estia and Nadia and jumped towards them.

The lion face suffered in pain when the black light cast by Estia’s sword swing hit it while Nadia braced herself with her shield and thrust forward with her sword to cut its feet.

The Chimera also didn’t intend to allow her to easily approach it as the mountain goat shot an electric shock towards Nadia.

Nadia firmly blocked that with the dragon shield and succeeded in cutting its front foot.

But the Chimera did not overlook that moment of opportunity.

The poisonous snake tail pounced on Nadia as her posture was broken from attacking.

At that time, Cathy and Kefin appeared.

Cathy ran at a speed that would beat Shisho in a straight line and whacked the snake’s head with all her strength using the flat of her sword and Kefin cut off the defenseless freefalling snake.

The lion with its face covered in darkness tried to release a flame breath but Estia was one step faster in stabbing the lion’s mouth with her sword.

Even though the mountain goat knew that the snake was chopped off and the lion was wounded, it could not tolerate its prided electric attack not causing any damage so it relentlessly rained electric attacks on Nadia.

Cathy and Kefin sliced at the rear legs to break its balance, swords pierced the body of the Chimera and with attacks on the mountain goat head, the Chimera raised its death throes and collapsed.

Without acting carelessly, the mountain goat’s head was chopped off and it was a complete victory against the Chimera.

“Im, impossible. That’s a Chimera? An A-rank upper tier monster... how?”

Brad could not comprehend the reality as he trembled and muttered while staring at the 4 people who defeated the Chimera.

“””””It’s because we spent all of our time from morning to night training in an environment where strong monsters appear with an excellent mentor and an excellent healer (nya).”””””

When the 4 of them declared in sync, the Chimera disappeared, leaving a magic stone but the returning magic circle appeared and swallowed the 4 of them at the same time.

“Ah.”

Even we did not expect the magic circle to suddenly encompass Kefin and the others.

What was more unexpected was the appearance of the labyrinth’s nucleus in front of Brad.

I don’t know if it was Great Luck-sensei working behind the scenes to distance me from that evil source or that it was abandoning its duty but I shouted when I came to my senses.

“Withdraw!!”

We ran towards the magic circle and Shisho tried to kill Brad before he touched the labyrinth nucleus with a flying slash but the slash was hindered by something.

Then, just as we were about to reach the magic circle in just a few more steps, the magic circle disappeared.

Chapter 167

Unreasonable overturn

Brad who was grasping the labyrinth core looked like he could not believe how he was still alive even after receiving Shisho's slash.

He checked his body again and again and seemed overjoyed knowing that he's still alive but he didn't move or make any sound.

Perhaps he thought as though he was revived.

Either way, now was not the time to bother about Brad.

"Shisho, come here quickly."

While drinking high-grade magical power potions, I confirmed that Shisho also entered the range of my spell and I began chanting.

『By the holy hand, by the breath of Mother Earth, using my magical power as sustenance, like the wings of an angel, create a sanctuary that sears all evil and become a shield that repels all impurities. Sanctuary Barrier.』

With a release of pale light, a game-like hemisphere spread out with me as the center.

It was my trump card against the Evil God.

If only that core wasn't here, we would have cleared without any problems... but it's more important to think about how to survive rather than brood on what has happened.

"Luciel, what is this hemisphere and the mirrors spinning around it?"

"This is my original barrier magic that I created by applying Sanctuary Circle so I call it Sanctuary Barrier. Please think of the rotating shields as an indicator of the durability of this barrier."

I wanted to describe the greatness of this spell but since there wasn't any time, I could only explain it later.

“To think that he would grab that core that is producing this amount of miasma, is that guy even sane?”

“Isn’t it because his consciousness has already mostly been taken over?”

Lionel and Shisho joked with each other but their foreheads were glistening with sweat.

Lionel’s forehead glistened with sweat once similar to this time when we fought with the Red Dragon but I had never ever seen Shisho’s forehead glisten with sweat.

“The Spirits are frightened but... we’ll be able to leave here right? I’ll be able to meet onee-sama once again right?”

“Please pray for that to happen. And if possible, I want you to support me.”

There should be a reason to why Lydia was left behind with us.

Would it be possible for her to call spirits or gods? It wasn’t a situation where I could joke around so I patiently maintained vigilance on Brad.

“<Hahaha, I feel great. I feel the overflowing power. You guys were looking down on me just now right?>”

Brad began approaching us and spoke but I could hear 2 overlapping voices.

It sounded as though it was telepathic communication, maybe he inserted magical power into his voice.

“Did it look like we were looking down on you?”

As I conversed with Brad, Shisho and the others measured the timing to attack him.

“<Your eyes resembled those nobles from that rotten Principality of Blange. I’m a reincarnated individual. Since I possessed Appraisal from the beginning, I was able to become a Merchant and because only slimes, goblins and horned rabbits appeared near the town, I defeated them, leveled up and acquired skills, it was seriously enjoyable.>”

“It was enjoyable right? Then why did you entrap other people?”

Even while his own body was burning within the Sanctuary Barrier, Brad continued talking without showing any signs of pain.

The sense of pain was probably lost completely once a person turned into undead.

“<Some dim-witted noble’s son kidnapped my sworn future lover, played with her and murdered her in the end. What do you think was his purpose? His only reason was because he was curious as it looked enjoyable to do it with commoners.>”

“.....You have my pity. Even I would not forgive that noble. But what you are doing now is the same as that noble.”

Springing a trap on them and turning them into slaves when he failed to kill them, kidnapping and attempted murder are indisputable crimes.

“<At that time, I was enlightened. That this world is one where the strong preys on the weak.>”

The words I threw at Brad could no longer reach him.

“Luciel, it seems like that guy has already gone insane.”

“Evidently he’s already seeing hallucinations.”

Brad ignored the Sanctuary Barrier and continued walking without stopping as his body burned so his body had finally begun to melt but he showed no intention of stopping.

However, a moment later, perhaps he knew that he could not advance up to a certain distance, he held the labyrinth core up high and declared.

“<You wish to stop me? I will never stop until I get my revenge for Mina. I will scatter all who block my way into nothingness. [Using my body, my blood and my magical power as sustenance, violence that can turn everything to nothing, manifest] >.”

The next instant, the location Brad was at exploded and he was wrapped in a blackish purple smoke.

Then, from within the blackish purple smoke, I sensed a tremendous intimidating aura swell greater and greater.

“Oi oi, I’m sensing some unusual pressure from that smoke.”

The sweat on Shisho’s forehead was reaching an amazing amount.

“Luciel-sama, are you able to cast Sanctuary Circle while maintaining this spell?”

Lionel asked me and since I’d like to survive, I’ll also do everything in my power.

“I’d like to live so I’ll give it a try. [By the holy hand, by the breath of Mother Earth, by my wish use my magical power as sustenance, like wings of light, using a shield of purification, create a sanctuary that sears everything wicked and impure. Sanctuary Circle.] ”

The pale light engulfed the smoke and it swallowed it all up.

The instant I registered that, a crack appeared on Sanctuary Circle and at the same time it shattered, I finally met the manifestation of the Evil God that I had never ever wanted to see.

His appearance leaned towards the features of the demon race but he closely resembled humans. *(TL: There’s no identifier as to whether the Evil God is a male or female. I’ll continue identifying the Evil God as a guy until stated otherwise.)*

<How rude, attacking all of the sudden.>

His figure resembled that of a human but just by listening to his voice, even with my Mental Resistance at level X, I could feel an intimidating force that caused goosebumps all over my body while Lydia who didn’t have any resistance ended up falling to a sitting position and trembled.

I was also bothered by how his appearance belied his identity as the Evil God.

“I apologize so could you let us leave? Although I don’t think Chief God Kuraiya will permit you to continue manifesting yourself indefinitely...”

<What sharp words. You are quite capable to be able to clear this labyrinth with a human’s body. Seeing that you all are not turning into undead while standing next to

the labyrinth core... perhaps you people are labyrinth disrupters?> (TL: *It's a new term but I'm guessing labyrinth disrupters/robbers/vandalisers = People like Luciel who go in to clear the labyrinth and kill the final boss to lower the activity of the labyrinth but don't touch the labyrinth core.*)

How did he find out? But it didn't look like he would let us go if I acknowledged his question so I tried my best to lie as naturally as possible.

"What are you talking about? We were merely chasing after that person who exploded just now?"

<Kukuku. Even though I'm called the Evil God, as a god, deception will not work on me. I'll have to give out punishment.>

I retorted in my mind 'Then don't ask in the first place!' as I maintained my barrier.

Just as I had that thought, the Evil God stretched his hand out and swung his hand from left to right.

That was all he did.

Even so, the Sanctuary Barrier shook and the rotating shields shattered one after the other and a crack appeared on the barrier too.

“[By the holy hand, by the breath of Mother Earth, using my magical power as sustenance, like the wings of an angel, create a sanctuary that sears all evil and become a shield that repels all impurities. Sanctuary Barrier.]”

[By the holy hand, by the breath of Mother Earth, using my magical power as sustenance, like the wings of an angel, create a sanctuary that sears all evil and become a shield that repels all impurities. Sanctuary Barrier.]

[By the holy hand, by the breath of Mother Earth, using my magical power as sustenance, like the wings of an angel, create a sanctuary that sears all evil and become a shield that repels all impurities. Sanctuary Barrier.] ”

I somehow managed to cast 3 Sanctuary Barriers and we somehow survived.

<Ooh. Well aren't you quite capable?>

“Thank you. And that’s right. Please return if you’ve had your fill.”

I really wanted him to return. Kuraiya-sama, Holy God of Healing-sama, Ancestor-sama, the Evil God is here.

Please quickly come help us.

As I desperately prayed for him to return, I started a conversation to buy time.

<Kukuku. You’re a funny guy.>

“It’s not funny at all. Why have I been dragged into the battle between the hero and the demon lord? The reincarnation dragons and spirits are nuisances too! Don’t get ordinary people involved any further.”

<Would you not mind even if the demon race dominated this world?>

I’ll just try doing it since I’ve never done it before.

I’ll end up misinterpreting him if he says it with such a light mood.

And I ended up comprehending what he was saying.

It’s surely a simple reason. As a being that reigns in the highest position on the ecological pyramid, he just cannot suppress his strong curiosity. Or rather, he just doesn’t wish to suppress it.

I’m able to do it so I did it. That’s probably all there’s to it.

No matter how much I try to convince such a being, his train of thought on how enjoyable a future where the demon race dominates would be would definitely not change and he will probably continue on that path.

“I do not know what kind of race the demon race is but if their individual ability is superior to that of humans and beastmen, I would probably not be able to enjoy a peaceful life. I’m begging you please go back.”

<Fumu. I like how you speak your true feelings. Become my pawn by turning into undead and see the world.>

Oh crap. It’s the time where the Evil God exhibits his power.

“I won’t let you.” “Perish.”

Shisho and Lionel attacked with full power slashes.

But the slashes were repelled by an invisible wall 30cm in front of him.

Even so, the 2 of them continued releasing slashes.

I was thankful for that as I channeled magical power to strengthen the Sanctuary Barrier.

<Fumu. It’s interesting how you all continue even while knowing that your attacks are meaningless against me.>

“If so, then if we give you even the slightest of injury, give up and return.”

“For the sake of protecting our disciple, we will slice through even the wall of a god.”

<Slice through and injure me? Kuwahahaha. Very well. I will turn you 2 into undead first.>

The Evil God seriously laughed out loud and he probably intended to play with the 2 of them like toys.

“Shisho, Lionel, even if the opponent is human-shaped, he’s a god.”

The 2 of them laughed at my words.

They probably moved knowing full well that the opponent is a god.

That’s exactly why Shisho and Lionel attacked.

They most likely could only see a future where we were annihilated if it continued...

Even so... when I thought that, Shisho called out to me.

“Luciel, I’ll tell you since it might be the end. No matter how painful it is, it will be the end once you give up. Even if you have to flounder in the mud, you might see the light if you continue. That is what I’ve taught you.”

“But Shisho, if we buy time, there’s a chance that Chief God Kuraiya will come to help

us.”

“Luciel, the Evil God is still a god, do you think he has not taken that possibility into consideration? Well, this is where you leave it to your teacher.”

“Shisho...”

His back looked amazingly large but I could only see the future where Shisho ended up dying.

Then, Lionel who stands shoulder to shoulder with Shisho also conveyed his gratitude to me while smiling.

“Luciel-sama, I’ve come to see this world in a new light after I met you. That’s not just limited to me but to many others as well. I will dedicate my body even until it turns into old bones if it is to save a person like you.”

“Lionel, you chose to remain as a slave because you still have something you have to settle right? Moreover, you have to think of Naria too.”

“Naria understands me. Furthermore, I remained as a slave to avenge my personal grudge. But the days I spent together with you saved me from the narrow heart I imprisoned myself in where I wished for revenge. Also, it is the duty of the retainer to take action for the sake of their owner.”

“Lionel...”

The 2 of them were prepared to die.

They intend to save my life even at the cost of burning their own life.

How do I end this without letting the 2 of them die? What can I do?

<Have you finished saying your farewells? Then, come at me.>

I could hear a tinge of laughter in the Evil God’s words.

That infuriated me and either way I would die if we do not overcome this predicament so I ceased being frightened.

“Evil God, seriously just give up and return. I will not allow anybody to turn into undead as long as I am around.”

『By the holy hand, by the breath of Mother Earth, by my wish use my magical power

as sustenance, with the wings of an angel, protect us from all impurities, create and impart an armor that creates a sanctuary. Sanctuary Armor.】

【By the holy hand, by the breath of Mother Earth, by my wish use my magical power as sustenance, with the wings of an angel, protect us from all impurities, create and impart an armor that creates a sanctuary. Sanctuary Armor.】

I cast my second trump card, Sanctuary Armor, on both Shisho and Lionel.

I only succeeded in creating this spell just a couple of days ago.

“Shisho, Lionel, I’ll definitely not allow you 2 to die so beat him up as soon as possible and make him retreat.”

“”Yeah!””

“Whirlwind Broad, here I come!”

“Sen’oni Lionel, here I come!”

The 2 of them went full throttle from the get-go, charged out of the Sanctuary Barrier and attacked the Evil God but the attacks all hit an invisible wall and were stopped.

However, the attacks didn’t happen only once or twice, the 2 of them continued attacking while cooperating.

The Evil God also retaliated but they evaded all of his attacks and counter attacked.

<It’s been a long time since I fought with humans. You guys are slightly weak. I’ll gradually increase the speed of my attacks so be careful as you’ll turn into undead if it hits.>

The Evil God said that and laughed.

However, thanks to him holding back until now, I understood why he stopped talking.

That invisible wall was miasma.

He’s made it invisible but the instant where it stops an attack I could faintly see the purple smoke.

I don't know if that was a hint given by the Evil God, that it was a trap or that I did not have a correct assessment of the situation but I decided to bet on it.

It's a chance gained from the countless times Shisho and Lionel attacked and evaded attacks.

To reward their effort, I cast Sanctuary Circle with No Chant while matching the timing when the 2 of them crossed the Evil God.

The result was... faint but definite wounds appeared on both arms of the Evil God.

<Fumu. That was quite enjoyable. To continually endure my attacks with such weak bodies... I will keep my promise in light of these 2. Farewell. Labyrinth disrupters.>

I was worried after hearing those words and looked at the 2 of them but it didn't seem like anything was wrong with them.

"I don't ever want to meet him again so let's go back. Where's the returning magic circle?"

When the Evil God tossed the labyrinth core, he announced the condition for the returning magic circle to appear immediately before he disappeared.

<You all will be able to exit the labyrinth when there are no undead present.>

"What did he mean? Lydia, are you alright?"

"So, somehow. So, sorry for not being of use."

I left Lydia who looked like she was about to cry alone for now.

"Shisho, Lionel, you 2 were seriously amazing. The 2 of you... what?!"

When I spoke to the 2 of them, the 2 of them smiled happily and their bodies crumbled.

The Sanctuary Armor on the 2 of them shattered and scattered in pieces.

“...Without this (Sanctuary Armor)... we wouldn't have been able to... save you... I don't know... what master I am but... I'm glad... that you are safe...”

“...I'm glad that... I could fulfill my duty... as a retainer.”

The 2 of them had peaceful expressions as they began accepting their death.

“I'll immediately heal you...!!”

Wiping off the tears that unexpectedly began spilling out from my eyes, I desperately thought of ways to save them.

“Sorry but... I've already turned half... into undead. At the very least... please receive... the experience points for killing me.”

“Before... our consciousness... falls into... darkness.”

Miasma slowly began to leak slightly from both their bodies.

The undead process would probably rapidly advance from here on out.

Is it really fine to let this happen?

Humans will die eventually.

But, can such an unreasonable death be permitted? I was irritated at the Chief God for not dealing with the evil doings of the Evil God.

Till today, I've purified all the ones who were turned into undead by the Evil God to save my own life but I intend to save ones who I am acquainted with?

I could hear various voices but my answer was unexpectedly simple.

“If my ordinary life was reincarnated into this world, it's probably meant to save these 2 people. Going by that thought, I'll take a bet here. Furthermore, it's not like it is certain that I will die from it.”

I stood up and began drinking high-grade magical power potion one after the other.

“Do the both of you know? (glug, glug, glug) The undead gives very little experience points. (glug, glug, glug) What would happen to my peace if Shisho and my strongest retainer die at the same time? Please think of it a little before saying your farewells.”

I opened my status page and began operating my SP.

“Shisho, in the past Shisho didn’t lie. I never thought that the day will come where I have a proper reason to use the SP I’ve accumulated.”

I consumed SP from my status page and spent 200P to acquire the Limit Break skill and 100P to acquire Supreme Luck. *(TL: Translated as Absolute Luck in the prologue, it's 1 tier below Heaven's Luck which costs 500P)*

Limit Break was explained as a skill to exceed one’s own limits while the demerit was that the recoil from the actions that go over one’s limit was doubled.

Great Luck-sensei was unreliable in this time’s incident so I had Supreme Luck-sensei step in.

I was taking a bet so I wanted to depend on luck.

“Lydia, please hold on to these.”

I tossed a bag with the 2 Hermit Keys and small piles of white gold and gold coins to Lydia.

“Please place me in the coffin if I lose consciousness. Also, if you run out of living expenses please work out a solution with that.”

I smiled to Lydia after saying that and while I didn’t hear her reply, I then smiled as I looked at Shisho and Lionel before explaining from the top.

“I will have the 2 of you pass away for a time. It would probably be so painful that you wish to die but I still have plenty of stuff to learn from the 2 of you and I still wish to laugh and train under you 2 so please prepare yourselves.”

I slapped my face and took in one deep breath before silently began chanting.

〔By the holy hand, by the breath of Mother Earth, by my wish use my magical power as sustenance, like wings of light, using a shield of purification, create a sanctuary that sears everything wicked and impure. Sanctuary Circle.〕

Firstly, I would be troubled if they remain as undead so I cast Sanctuary Circle first.

Moreover, to prevent them from completely disappearing, I continually cast Extra

Heal.

『 『By the holy hand, by the breath of Mother Earth, by my wish using my magical power as sustenance, become the breath of an angel, restore him to the form he should originally have, I pray to the mysteries of life. Extra Heal.』 』

Then, before their souls rose to the skies, I tried calling back and grabbing hold of their souls.

Even if it's a magic designated as prohibited, if it's a fate that was unreasonably plucked by the Evil God's intervention, it should be alright if I overturn that unreasonable fate right?

『 『Holy God who governs healing, God who governs fate, by the ancient pledge, for one who's fate has originally decayed, for one who has originally been called back to the wheel of reincarnation, using my magical power as sustenance, I pray in the name of kindness for the re-connection of thread that spins the future for their original life, I bid for the judgment of the gods. Revive.』 』

Unlike the usual pale light, golden light descended onto Shisho and Lionel.

Ascertaining that with my own eyes, I sighed a sigh of relief. At that instant, my heartbeat intensified as if my heart was about to rupture and I was on the verge of losing consciousness. However, their bodies had not completely regenerated yet.

I gritted my teeth and felt something warm flow from my nose and ears but I gathered strength into my feet and stomped down to channel in magical power.

Then, somehow, their bodies completely regenerated and after ascertaining that the golden light had stopped shining, I finally lost consciousness.

Chapter 168

Compensation for the Forbidden art and hereafter

In a world where there was only darkness, I could not move my body at all but the *Dokun, Dokun* sounds of heartbeat taught me that I was alive.

Even though I could not move my body, my mind could still function and my magical power had completely recovered without me noticing but I was in a puzzling condition where I could not use Healing Magic.

One possibility I could think of was that by using the forbidden magic Revival in combination with other magic and in addition, chanting them multiple times, I might have pushed myself too far beyond my limit.

For a forbidden technique that can only be performed in exchange for a life just by casting it once, I cast it twice at the same time.

It won't be strange if something happened depending on the decision of the gods.

I had no choice but to begin searching with presence and magical power perception but I could only sense my own magical power and presence so I was beginning to wonder if I was truly alive.

In that pitch black world, dazzling strong lights that were even more intense than the sun descended down.

Then, voices resounded in my head.

<Traveller from another world who traveled through space and time, thou activated the forbidden art with a human body.>

<Usually, it would be something that can never be forgiven.>

<It is, however, also a fact that it was caused by an interference from the Evil God.>

<This round, there will be no punishment.>

<However, thy body will likely pay the price for the forbidden art.>

<Recipient of my... the Holy Healing God's Blessing, I look forward to the time thou becomes a saint once again and return to healing.>

<< << <<Awaken.>> >> >>

Voices resounded in my head in order but I forgot to reply due to the overwhelming sense of divinity.

When I heard the last voice, I felt myself get pulled up into the sky at the same time the gathered lights engulfed the darkness.

It felt as if I was being gently hugged by something.

Then, the light caused the blood in my petrified body to flow once again and I could feel the shackles on my body unravel with the warmth.

After confirming that the dazzling lights had subsided, I slowly opened my eyes and I was greeted by darkness once again.

"What the heck!!"

The instant I tsukkomi-ed, I felt my hand knock into something and I heard a rattling noise.

"?!... Am I inside a coffin?"

I attempted to slowly push against the part I was touching.

When I did so, the one-side opening coffin slowly opened and I appeared in a pure white space.

"This place is?"

Upon exiting the coffin, a door appeared beside the coffin.

“...It seems like I am inside the Hermit’s Coffin. So Lydia did properly follow my instruction to put me into the coffin.”

While thanking Lydia in my mind, I checked my status before leaving the room as there was something on my mind.

I couldn’t help but feel uneasy about the Holy Healing God’s words.

| | | | |
|-----------------------------------|--|---------------------------------|--------------|
| Name: | Luciel | LV: | 193 (91↑) |
| Job: | (Healer X) | HP: | 7290 (4270↑) |
| | Faith Dragon Knight III (Four Attribute Dragon Knight) | MP: | 5270 (2660↑) |
| Age: | 21 | | |
| STR: | 850 (484↑) | INT: | 961 (539↑) |
| VIT: | 932 (543↑) | MGI: | 959 (499↑) |
| DEX: | 801 (450↑) | RMG: | 954 (500↑) |
| AGI: | 825 (456↑) | SP: | 86 (119↓) |
| 〔Skills〕 | | | |
| [Proficiency Appraisal—] | | [Great luck—] | |
| [Supreme Luck —] | | [Limit Break —] | |
| [Taijutsu VI] | | [Sword Mastery V] | |
| [Spear Mastery IV] | | [Shield Mastery IV] | |
| [Archery I] | | [Twin Spear Sword Technique IV] | |
| [Throwing VI] (1↑) | | [Footwork VIII] (2↑) | |
| [Magical Power Manipulation X] | | [Magical Power Control X] | |
| [Magical Power Amplification III] | | [Body Strengthening VI] (4↑) | |
| [Chant Shortening IX] (2↑) | | [Chant Termination VII] (2↑) | |
| [No Chant IV] (2↑) | | [Magic Circle Chant VI] (2↑) | |
| [Multiple Chant III] | | ([Holy Magic X]) | |
| [Meditation IX] (1↑) | | [Concentration IX] | |
| [Leadership III] | | [Danger Perception VIII] (3↑) | |
| [Presence Perception V] | | [Magical Power Perception V] | |

| | |
|---------------------------------------|--|
| [Search for Enemy I] | [Dismantling IV] (2↑) |
| [Horse Riding III] | |
| [Parallel Thinking VII] (2↑) | [Thought Acceleration III] |
| [Spatial Awareness II] | |
| [Trap Sensing IV] (2↑) | [Trap Detection III] (2↑) |
| [Trap Disarming III] | [Cartography V] (1↑) |
| | |
| [HP Recovery IX] (1↑) | [MP Recovery IX] |
| [HP Increased Rate of Growth IX] | [MP Increased Rate of Growth IX] |
| [STR Increased Rate of Growth IX] | [VIT Increased Rate of Growth IX] |
| [DEX Increased Rate of Growth IX] | [AGI Increased Rate of Growth IX] |
| [INT Increased Rate of Growth IX] | [MGI Increased Rate of Growth IX] |
| [RMG Increased Rate of Growth IX] | [Physical Ability Increased Rate of Growth VI] (1↑) |
| | |
| [Poison Resistance IX] | [Weakness Resistance IX] |
| [Paralysis Resistance IX] | [Magic Seal Resistance IX] |
| [Petrification Resistance IX] | [Disease Resistance IX] |
| [Sleep Resistance IX] | [Blunt Damage Resistance VII] (1↑) |
| [Charm Resistance VII] (2↑) | [Bewitch Resistance IX] (2↑) |
| [Curse Resistance IX] | [Mental Resistance X] (1↑) |
| [Slash Resistance IX] (2↑) | [Pierce Resistance VII] (2↑) |
| [Intimidation Resistance V] | |
| 『Titles』 | |
| [One who changed their destiny] | All status +10 |
| [God of Destiny's divine protection] | Increased SP acquisition |
| [Holy Healing God's blessing] | Potency of Holy attribute healing magic increased by 1.5 times |
| | Strengthened Holy, Flame, Earth, Lightning offensive and defensive attributes. |
| [Divine protection from many Dragons] | Rise in combat skills and status. |
| | It is now possible to converse with the dragon race |

| | |
|--|--|
| [Divine protection from many Spirits] | Strengthened Water, Earth, Fire, Light, Darkness offensive and defensive attributes. |
| [Dragon (<i>Oriental Dragon</i> 龍) Slaughter] | Grant and support of attributes. Proof of having slain more than one dragon. Strengthened offense and defense against dragons 龍 and their kin |
| [Dragon race (<i>Japanese Dragon</i> 竜) Slayer] | Strengthened offense and defense against dragons 竜 |
| [Giant Slayer] | Strengthened offense and defense against giants |
| [Magical beast Slayer] | Strengthened offense and defense against magical beasts |
| [One who repelled the Evil God] | Against the demon race and monsters (TL: That's all the author wrote...) |
| [One who unleashed the seal] | Immune to the curse of the evil god. Capable of acquiring the power of the sealed dragons |
| [One guided by the Dragon God] | Relationship with the Dragon race and those who follow the dragons strengthens |

I could see the status screen that appeared with its usual white letters but 2 of the items were displayed in gray, as if indicating that those abilities were lost.

“...It was Shisho and Lionel who repelled the Evil God but the main problem is the grayed out Healer and Holy Attribute Magic... [Heal].”

I invoked heal as usual but it completely did not activate and neither did I sense the consumption of magical power.

I tried using Proficiency Appraisal to check on the proficiency of the skill but because the experience value was not displayed after a skill had reached X, there wasn't any meaning in doing so.

“...It won't be funny if Shisho and Lionel are still dead after all this but if they are alive...”

As expected, knowing that I can no longer use Holy Attribute Magic, I can't say that I

had a steel spirit did not waver.

Since I don't have such a thing in the first place.

Nevertheless, I believed in the words of the Holy Healing God and vowed to one day regain my Holy Attribute magic as I opened the door while praying that Shisho and Lionel were still alive.

Then, Shisho and Lionel flew into my vision as well as the figures of all my retainers.

"You're finally awake, Luciel."

"Luciel-sama, thank you for waking up."

With Shisho and Lionel lined up, I thanked the gods for them being alive.

However, there was something that bothered me...

"So the 2 of you were revived... I'm so glad. So, have the 2 of you become a little younger?"

"...You are seriously reckless."

Shisho held his eyes as he turned his face away.

"You did not wake up even after 10 days after that incident so we were worried. It's true that my body has become considerably more youthful."

Ten days huh... so that's why I don't feel the awful feeling of magical power depletion.

Nevertheless, for it to have a rejuvenating effect, the forbidden art sure has some amazing benefits.

"That seems like an additional effect. Even so, did the 2 of you wake up immediately?"

The ones who answered were my retainers who were watching from the side.

"The 2 of them regained consciousness 3 days ago nya."

Cathy raised her voice.

"Because our slave crest was suddenly dispelled, Cathy and I were fearful that Luciel-sama had passed away."

Kefin brought his worried face closer to mine as he said that.

“Kefin, your face is too close!! Dispelled slave crest... that means I also died once? Now that I think about it, where’s this place?”

“It’s the capital of Grandol, a high-class inn I stayed at before. I was told that here, as long as you pay money, information would not be leaked out.”

Estia answered but what about the money required to stay in a high-class inn for this many days?

“We were able to stay here using the money you entrusted to Lydia.”

Nadia told me, perhaps because my expression showed my doubts about the money.

Just as I was about to thank Lydia, Lydia trembled and burst into tears.

Since she unexpectedly began crying, I was slightly perplexed as I asked.

“...What’s wrong Lydia? We were saved thanks to Lydia. I wish to properly convey my thanks.”

I told her my intent to thank her but she shook her head side to side and answered with a quiet voice.

“At that time, all I could do was tremble. I could only look at Luciel-sama, Broad-sama and Lionel-sama fight desperately.”

Well, she would have probably been killed if she jumped into action then.

I had no thoughts of complaining as she had the bravery to not do anything and helped place us in the Hermit’s Coffin after everything had ended.

“Lydia, we are alive right now precisely because you save us by placing us in the Hermit’s Coffin. You are the benefactor of the 3 of us. I am truly grateful. Thank you.”

I lowered my head to Lydia.

After that, not only me but Shisho and Lionel also lowered their heads, causing Lydia to be even more flustered and cry even harder as Nadia gently hugged her until she stopped.

Then, Shisho and Lionel confronted me with the main topic.

“Luciel, you exercised a magic of that scale so naturally, there are adverse effects right?”

“For Whirlwind and I, our bodies and job levels returned to 1 and all the skills we have trained until now have disappeared.”

It looks like the resurrection magic in this world is a lot harsher than I had imagined.

The 2 of them casually spoke about their losses.

“...What remains is our knowledge and experience. Well, I was surprised that I’ve somehow become younger.”

Shisho gave off a mischievous air that he normally doesn’t emit to soften the heavy atmosphere but thinking about it once again, what that the 2 of them lost was tremendous.

Even so, it is probably a fact that they are truly happy for being alive.

And I didn’t want to further douse the atmosphere but I honestly answered as I looked into Shisho’s eyes.

“I lost my Healer job and Holy Attribute Magic.”

“!! Luciel, I’m sorry.”

“Luciel-sama!!”

Shisho and Lionel’s faces turned to despair upon hearing my words and everyone also had speechless expressions.

I anticipated that everyone would make those expressions but my heart still clenched at the sight.

However, I told everyone with a smile.

“Oh well, it will work out somehow. Attribute-wise I can still sense the magical power of the Holy Attribute, it’s just that I can’t use it.”

“But you will have to throw away the position that you had painstakingly built up.”

Even if that worst case scenario happens, it will still work out somehow and I can just live in Ienith as a Merchant.

“Even if I lose my position as the S-rank Healer, I can take up the title of the director of the school in Ienith or be the chairman of Luciel Firm(tentative) so it’s all right. Moreover, I’ll definitely show you all that I will one day be able to use Holy Attribute Magic.”

“...Is there hope to regain your ability?”

Lionel anxiously asked.

It can’t be helped that Shisho and Lionel think that it was their responsibility but I had already anticipated it.

“Yes. To tell the truth, I have thought of this possibility so I do have a few ideas.”

“If my strength would come in use, I will help with anything.”

Isn’t it about time Shisho returned to Meratoni and deal with his guildmaster work?

But since there are things in the world better left unsaid, I’ll tell him later if he doesn’t realize it.

“Actually, previously when I met the Water Spirit in Ienith, it prophesized that I will one day fall into despair and asked me to visit it then. So I was prepared for it in advance.”

“...Are there any strategies to break through this predicament?”

I felt as if Shisho was more worried about me than I was.

His expression was as if he was clutching at straws.

“There are 3 methods for me to be able to use Holy Attribute Magic. One method would be to let Pope-sama change my job. If it goes well, I might be able to become a Paladin or a Sage so there’s a possibility that I will be able to use Holy Attribute Magic that way.”

“Job!? I see! Luciel would be acquainted with the Pope after all.”

Shisho was getting excited.

I believe that is the easiest method.

But I wondered if that much was enough to overcome the despair the Water Spirit

spoke of.

“Yes. Pope-sama would likely assist me. Even if Pope-sama can’t change my job, I can go to Nelldal to get the Wind Spirit’s Blessing and once I acquired the blessings of all 6 attributes from the spirits, I pray that my job will automatically change.”

“If it’s a bet, Luciel-sama is absurdly strong so it would likely go well.”

Kefin laughed as he recalled the strength of the random bosses I pulled out as well as my usual lucky episodes.

“The second method would be to visit the Water Spirit. From the way it spoke, it felt to me like it knew of something I can do to be able to use Holy Attribute Magic.”

“If we go to Ienith, we’ll be able to meet Naria again so it will be great nya.”

Cathy said that while glancing at Lionel with eyes hinting at something but Lionel’s expression was stiff.

Lionel is quite a serious person so it can’t be helped...

“The third method would be to find a person capable of using Space-time magic to reset my skills. Then, I can once again re-acquire the skills using SP. Starting my training to relearn everything. If I do so, I’ll have to ask for some help from Shisho too.”

“Betting on a fairy-tale like magic like that... moreover, a skill reset?”

Shisho had an awful expression as he had nowhere to vent his anger.

Lionel also had a demon-like expression so it was quite terrifying.

“I’ll just be in the same situation as Shisho and Lionel. I’ll say it now that I was terribly shocked when I found out that I had lost my Holy Attribute Magic. I’ll probably tremble when I see monsters. Even so, no matter how many times I unwind time, I will definitely do the same thing. If the 2 of you feel indebted to me, treasure your lives such that I can think back feeling glad that I had saved you 2 and let’s aim to grow old together.”

I told them with a smile.

Unlike when I first came to this world, I now possess combat-ready techniques, the greatest equipment, and money.

And companions that I can rely on the most.

The fact that I'm not starting from nothing, the fact that there is a possibility, I abandoned my desire to give up and moved forward.

If I did not meet the Water Spirit at that time, I believe my confidence would have scattered along with Shisho and Lionel.

With Great Luck-sensei who built the possibility for the future at that time together with the newly added stronger Supreme Luck-sensei, I prayed that they would reel in the chance for me to regain my Holy Attribute Magic as I vowed to do my best with what I can do.

Thus, for us who had safely revived, in order to regain my Holy Attribute Magic, I decided to first head to Meratoni to check that it was really alright if Shisho doesn't do his work before heading to the Holy Capital.

When everyone left my room, I used the keys Lydia returned to me to open the Hermit's Stable.

It was slightly dirty it should be fine.

I thought as I called out for Fornoir.

Fornoir came out from the stable and the first thing she did was play bite my head.

"It's been such a long time since we met so don't play bite me... hey Fornoir, I can't use Holy Attribute Magic anymore. My identity has completely crumbled so I'm scared of the reaction from those around me. Furthermore, am I capable of surviving in this world without Healing Magic? I'm so worried until it's unbearable."

Perhaps Fornoir got tired of biting my head, she turned as if to return to the stables but she sent a kick flying.

"Ouch, don't kick me it's dangerous!"

"Burrururuu."

Fornoir once again turned back to face me and looked at me.

“If you’re a spirit, can’t you talk to me?”

When I said that, it looked like she made a slightly sad expression as this time, she really returned to the stable.

“What’s with that... so that’s my answer huh?”

Fornoir seriously kicked me but my arm only felt slightly painful.

She was probably trying to tell me that I’ve become stronger even without my Holy Attribute Magic.

“Despite that, I hurt her when I asked her to speak to me. I’ll properly apologize to her tomorrow.”

While feeling guilty of making use of Fornoir as a convenient existence, I was thankful as I could feel slightly more optimistic as I went to my bed and slept.

Chapter 169

Till we meet again

Does the return of the missing mine to its original location herald the revival of the Demon Lord or foretell a cataclysmic disaster? Such rumors were circulating around Grandol so we purchased food ingredients, large amounts of magical power potions and, just to be safe, some high-grade potions before we departed for Meratoni.

Unlike the route we took to come from Meratoni, this time, we had to pass through the checking station but my S-rank Healer title apparently demonstrated its effectiveness as we were able to successfully pass through.

There's also Nadia and Lydia who are from Blange so I told them that we would be traveling in that direction via Grandol as we head towards the Holy Capital.

And, there were also other differences compared to when we first came to Grandol.

Shisho and Lionel acted as the coachman with Cathy and Kefin in front of the carriage while Estia, Nadia and I were behind it.

Lionel thought of this placement that would be the most efficient if we had to battle monsters or bandits.

Monsters really did appear but certainly because I now have perception-based skills, in addition to being able to give instructions while overseeing the group as a whole, I will no longer suffer surprise attacks from my left and right as well as from behind me.

Well, Cathy and Kefin pretty much did most of the battles and weakened the monsters before letting Shisho and Lionel defeat them to raise their levels.

We've exchanged roles since the time at the Labyrinth of Traps.

"My level increased again. Leveling up so rapidly reminds me of my rookie days."

"...I also wanted to become an Adventurer if I had the choice..."

Shisho joyfully spoke of his rookie days but Lionel did not talk about his days within the army.

It might have been due to the difference in having monsters as opponents as compared to having humans as opponents.

Well, Shisho probably did kill bandits as well but Lionel was in the Imperial Army and moreover, he held the position of a general so it's unlikely that he only killed those that were evil.

Even if fighting is bread-and-butter of the occupation, I could imagine how mentally painful the work would have been for Lionel, whose personality is to only kill those that are evil, to fight because of orders from the country.

“Burrururu.”

Because I was lost in thought as I was riding, Fornoir sounded like she was angrily telling me to concentrate on riding.

She forgave me when I apologized to her for what happened yesterday.

While thinking that Fornoir is very mature, Lydia previously mentioned that Fornoir is the Light Spirit but I wonder when would she give me her divine protection.

That's why our relationship was not human and spirit but instead remains as human and horse and she remains as my partner.

Talking about what changed and what didn't change, what changed was my heart.

I stopped feeling hesitant yesterday. But thinking about the future, I felt like I was being crushed by anxiety.

Since I can't utilize Holy Attribute Magic, I will not be able to heal the sick whenever we stop by a village, that feeling of frustration and vexation leads to irritation... no, I'll stop making excuses and behaving like a virtuous person.

Gradually without noticing, I had grown to desire praises and words of gratitude from others.

And now, instead of receiving the gratitude of others, I am probably terrified of being

blamed for losing my ability.

“Burururu.”

I was surprised by the sound made by Fornoir.

It seems like I was caught in a vortex of thought.

“Sorry. I’ll try my best to change my thoughts.”

That’s right.

I saved Shisho and Lionel.

Furthermore, it’s not like there’s completely no hope, I can probably hold out.

I looked forward... the carriage was blocking the way but I decided to move forward and my expedition to Grandol that spanned 2 months had ended.

What awaited us when we arrived at Meratoni was a sermon from Garba-san and Grulga-san.

In the guildmaster room of the Adventurer’s Guild, Shisho, Garba-san, Grulga-san and I, with only the 4 of us, we explained what happened this 2 months in detail.

Immediately after we began our explanation, I felt intense anger begin to leak from the 2 of them but they quietly listened to our explanation until the end.

Then, the sermon began.

“Broad, what the heck are you doing!! You took a break for the sake of training Luciel and ended up fighting demons and the Evil God, if Luciel wasn’t there, you would probably have died and disappeared from this world! ! And Luciel, you too. You are not a mere Healer but the representative of all Healers and stopping your idiotic Shisho is also the job of the disciple. Using the forbidden art and losing your abilities, what are you going to do!!”

Even though nobody blamed me, Garba-san scolded me.

Of course, I was frightened but my body felt slightly lighter.

“There was no reply no matter how much I called with the magic communication bead, so that’s the reason... Broad, your own position... no, the Adventurer’s Guild will take 100 steps back, it doesn’t matter anymore. Leaving that aside, have you forgotten about our promise? What was our reason for retiring from being an Adventurer at a young age? It was for the sake of nurturing many adventurers and protecting the people who cannot fight, to establish and revive the Adventurer’s Guild to its original form!!”

Garba-san laid his emotions bare and grabbed Shisho’s collar.

Shisho allowed him to do so and did not match Garba-san’s gaze.

“Big brother, Broad’s level now is low so it’s dangerous.”

Grulga-san said as he grabbed Garba-san’s hand and made him let go of Broad Shisho’s collar.

“I certainly did want to give up once... but since Luciel-kun came to the Adventurer’s Guild, the adventurers in Meratoni gradually grew stronger, the requests from the residents increased and the crimes also decreased. In just a few years this town became extremely bright. Hey Broad, I understand that you treasure Luciel-kun. But if you were prophesized to die, wouldn’t it have been better to at least discuss it with us once?”

“...Sorry.”

That was all Shisho said.

Looking at the appearance of Shisho with his head down, Garba-san let out a grand sigh.

He probably felt that blaming him any more would just be venting his own frustration.

However, his target was not just Shisho.

Garba-san smiled as he looked at me.

I felt like I saw the devil’s smile that Warabis described.

“Luciel-kun, if you regain your Holy Attribute Magic, I will also give you my training so I won’t say anything now.”

“Ye, yes. I look forward to your guidance at that time.

...Even though my mental resistance should have already reached level X, I was getting terrible chills just from thinking about the training that was to come.

Nevertheless, I was relieved that I won't be berated by mouth any further.

Then, I understood the meaning behind the previous smile.

“Yup. Luciel-kun is honest after all. Just like Broad's favorite phrase, he's like my son so I wish to slowly and honestly nurture him. You mentioned something like that enthusiastically right.”

“Garba?! That's cowardly.”

That's right. He began blurting out words that Shisho could not tell me face to face.

Shisho tried to grab Garba-san to seal his mouth but the similarly grinning Grulga-san stopped him from behind.

Now, he probably can't shake him off with the difference in status.

To think that Shisho thought of me that way... but, if that's the case, I know of 2 others in front of me who look at me with a similar gaze.

“I also respect and trust the 3 of you from the bottom of my heart.”

I have a feeling that if Shisho is my father, Garba-san and Grulga-san definitely see me as a much younger brother and they take care of me while watching over my growth.

After I said that, it felt like Garba-san finally switched from his scary grin to his usual kind smiling expression.

“After Broad heard that Luciel-kun established a school in Ienith, he was considering if he should retire from his guildmaster position in the future. And he wanted to set a new goal where all children regardless of them being born from nobles or commoners attended the school.”

“...Was it by any chance quite an inopportune timing?”

“Kind of. Since I didn't expect Luciel-kun to be tangled in an event that influences the entire world. It gave even us a surprise...”

“That’s true...”

Well, a normal person would probably live without getting involved with the words Reincarnation Dragon or Demon race.

“Don’t make such a gloomy expression. Well then, actually, Broad has quite a lot of work piled up so there’s no way we can let him travel with Luciel-kun. Moreover, I doubt he would want his disciple to see his weak side so please wait patiently for Shisho to make his comeback.”

“Leave Broad to me and my elder brother, hurry up and get your Holy Attribute Magic back. Even if that can’t be done, don’t mope over it as we’ll train you to become an SSS-rank adventurer so make sure to return.”

Garba-san and Grulga-san showed their kindness one way or the other.

“Luciel, for that reason, for the time being, I won’t be able to teach you anything. But I will definitely make a comeback as your Shisho so do your best.”

“Okay.”

“Contact us with the magic communication bead when you’re troubled, the 3 of us will work out a solution.”

“I’ll look forward to your aid at that time.”

“Luciel, don’t give up on life. Let’s meet again.”

“Shisho too, don’t recklessly charge at monsters.”

We firmly exchanged a handshake and said our farewells.

Thus, Shisho left our party and we left Meratoni when night fell as if to conceal ourselves.

At that time, the first to notice Estia’s strange condition was Lydia.

“Your complexion is very pale?”

“I, I’m fine.”

But her face was completely pale.

“...I can’t heal at this moment, there’s no helping it. Let’s go to the orphanage.”

I decided to bring her to the orphanage.

Since there's no way I could make her drink the terribly disgusting potion when we're not even in battle.

I took the lead as the blood on Estia's face receded.

I quickly rushed into the orphanage.

"Hey, is the director in?"

"What's with the noise? The children will be woken up... Luciel... sama."

I wanted to tsukkomi at that time but I held myself back.

"Sorry but I feel like my magical power is slightly depleted so I can't use my magic, please treat her in my stead."

"...So unreasonable. Nevertheless, it's fine. Who should I heal?"

"Estia... this girl."

"Fumu. This way then."

When he guided her to the chair, the Darkness Spirit switched with Estia.

"I don't need treatment. Family... you have a daughter?"

Botacyl was shocked at his hand getting grabbed and glared at me.

"...I did not tell her anything. Estia, are you alright?"

"Yes. Leaving that aside, about your family?"

"It painful. My wife died. My daughter was getting eroded by disease and I could not heal her. Then, I asked the Empire that was developing a secret medicine to treat her, after seeing her healthy appearance only once, I was told that she has become a slave and could no longer meet her. Now I still continue to search for her."

"...Is that so. I don't need healing."

The Darkness Spirit went outside.

"What was that. I'll leave your payment here."

I left 5 gold coins and chased after the Darkness Spirit and it was waiting for me outside.

“What happened exactly?”

“I’ll tell you the reason after Estia calms down. Please head for the Holy Capital for now.”

The Darkness Spirit only mentioned that to me and I could imagine that she could not afford to say anymore.

“We’ll be forcibly traveling at night. Everyone, please do not let down your guard.”

“””””Yes!”””””

We departed for the Holy Capital while under the cover of darkness.

Even though it was dark, we had torchlights so it wasn’t hard to run.

Furthermore, the horses’ boss Fornoir took the initiative to pull so the other horses looked like they were calm.

I was vigilant as we ran down the night road but the relationship between Botacyl and Estia continued to bother me in my mind.



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